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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this curriculum unit on citizenship education is to enrich the way students think about American Indians by presenting the history of American Indians and their relationship with white Americans. The first chapter discusses the kinds of ideas people have about Indians, especially stereotypes of Indians being wild, red-colored, and uncivilized. The second chapter looks at the prehistory of Indian culture to see the ways in which Indian peoples learned to exploit the land. The excavations of an Indian camp site at Green Point, Michigan, are described, including discussion of the dig, findings, and changes in Indian life from 500-1700 A.D. Chapter three recounts Indian-white relations during 1600-1900 in order to explore what happened when a stone-age culture faced an acquisitive white culture that was more highly developed and had more resources. The Iroquois Indians in the northeast serve as an example of how Indian life patterns were destroyed by European occupation of America. The last chapter examines the Indian-white contact and the way it has caused recent problems for Indians. Data on employment, income, and death are presented; termination of the Menominee tribe is related; and reservation living is described. (ND)

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STUDENT BOOK

INDIANS IN THE AMERICAN SYSTEM: PAST AND PRESENT

by

IAN WESTBURY

and

SUSAN WESTBURY

SO009474

Dr. Mark M. Krug, Editor

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This book is dedicated to the
memory of Charles P. Schwartz —
a good man and a good citizen

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January, 1975

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INTRODUCTION

Vine Deloria Jr., an American Indian writing on the history of his people, defined the present mood of American Indians in these words:

"To be an Indian in modern American society is in a very real sense to be unreal and ahistorical. It is this unreal feeling that has been welling up inside us and threatens to make this decade the most decisive in history for Indian people. In so many ways, Indian people are re-examining themselves in an effort to re-define a new social structure for their people." (Custer Died for Your Sins, Macmillan, 1971).

This re-examination of their status and prospects in American society takes many forms, as frequent newspaper and television reports indicate. American Indians in many parts of the country have embarked on a course of militant action to defend their rights. In other instances, they are taking steps to improve their economic situation and to preserve their culture.

Thus, this is a propitious time to publish a teaching unit on the American Indians in the curriculum series of the Schwartz Citizenship Project. In spite of the appearance in recent years of a number of books on the history of American Indians, there is a dire lack of quality teaching materials in the area. The history of American Indians, and the unhappy story of the relationship between them and white Americans are inadequately and unfairly treated in most textbooks.

Susan Westbury, a doctoral candidate in history, and Professor Ian Westbury have combined insights from the archeology of ancient Indian settlements with an examination of the place of native Americans in contemporary society. I particularly commend to teachers and students the case study of the Menominee Indian Reservation. It is an opportunity for an in-depth examination of the economic, social, and political dilemmas facing American Indians. It is not easy to write a scholarly, dispassionate and interesting teaching unit on American Indians, but the authors have accomplished this objective.

Dr. Mark M. Krug, Editor

PREFACE

The purpose of this curriculum unit is to enrich the way its readers think about American Indians. The first chapter discusses the kinds of ideas people have of other groups of people. We believe that many Americans have an out-of-date and inaccurate picture of Indians. One way to change and broaden that picture is to understand more deeply both the past and present of America's Indians, and that is our goal in this book. We do this partly by exploring the past of a group of Indians who lived from about 500 B. C. to 1300 A. D. in the Saginaw Valley in Michigan. We can thus understand one of the many ways of life of America's Indians, and trace the development and change in that pattern through to the white occupation of America. We then explore the time of violent and destructive change of Indian civilization which occurred when Europeans came to America and, over time, settled the land from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The last chapter attempts to show the way of life and problems of some present-day Indians. The place that Indians and other minorities have and will have in our nation is now being considered anew and the ways in which we see the past will play an important role in determining the future. If in working through this book, readers begin to see America's Indian minority in new ways, we will be satisfied.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book would not have been possible without the support and encouragements of a large number of friends and colleagues. This is particularly true of our venture into American archeology, and without the help of James E. Fitting and James B. Griffin, the task would have been impossible. They shared with us their knowledge and enthusiasm, as well as making available a manuscript of the study reporting the results of the Schultz excavation. We must thank, too, our secretary, Madeline Ronne, who worked hard over many messy pages. Most of all we are grateful to Mark M. Krug, Director of the Schwartz Citizenship Project, for the opportunity to attempt this study; we took much longer than we said we would, and tested his patience to the limit.

CHAPTER I

HOW DO YOU SEE INDIANS?

On a fall day a couple of years ago we were walking in some woods near our home when our son, then four years old, asked us whether there were any "wild Indians" there. We didn't say "no," but instead asked him what a "wild Indian" was. He could not answer us, but what did he mean by "wild Indian," and what was a "wild Indian?" He knew what wild animals were, and we wondered whether he might have thought that there were "wild Indians" similar to wild animals. If this was what he was trying to say, what kind of picture of America's Indians did he have? We had no way of getting the answer to this from our son, but his remark was disturbing because it showed how stereotyped his conception of the Indians was.

This incident is not important for its own sake, but for what it tells us about the ways many white Americans think about Indian Americans. How many of us see Indian Americans in ways that are not very different from the way our four-year old did? And, if we do, what does that mean? Here are the associations of some high school juniors to the following terms:

"WHITE SETTLERS"

forts, John Wayne, pioneers, rifles, greed, cowboys, wagon trail, misunderstanding, gold, sheriff, war, cattle, slaughter, cavalry

"RED INDIANS"

peace pipe, feathers, tribes, hunters, reservations, bow and arrow, warriors, proud, tomahawk, scalp, bison, trail of tears, tee-pee, brave, firewater, ornamentation*

The students' picture of America's white settlers is obviously wildly inaccurate. We can laugh at ourselves for thinking even for a moment that the Americans who settled the West all looked and acted like John Wayne movies. By looking critically also at this picture of America's Indians, we can point out the places where

*Responses of students at Laboratory School, University of Chicago. Courtesy of Mr. Edward Bernstein.

it might be fundamentally inaccurate, or, if not inaccurate, certainly incomplete. We are, in our thinking about Indian Americans, very much the victims of stereotypes; the overly-simplified and fixed ideas about people or things that we all use much of the time to sort our worlds into manageable pieces. Unfortunately, most Americans know far too little about the history, or the current problems of Indian Americans to be able to escape from the security of their stereotypes of Indians.

We know that when whites came to settle America in the sixteenth century the continent was inhabited by Indian tribes, that some Indians resisted white settlement, that this resistance was overcome after cruel and bloody battles that lasted into the late nineteenth century, and that today the descendants of these Indian people live on reservations, mainly in the west; in Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, the Dakotas, and California. But while this is all true, it doesn't tell us enough.

Many scholars say that Indian peoples occupied America for about 15,000 years before European settlement. At the time of the initial settlement of America by whites, Indians had developed ways of life that were very different, but in many ways as advanced as the life of most people in Europe. We tend to use present day political boundaries when we think of America's past settlement and forget that the Spanish conquistadors were amazed at the size and cleanliness of the Aztec (Indian) capital of Tenochtitlan with its population of approximately 300,000. Tenochtitlan must be regarded as an important part of the history of Indian civilization in America. A history of Europe that did not discuss the role that Rome, Paris, or London played in European civilization would be a curious history. Our view of the history of America's Indians is curious in just this way.

The destruction of Indian civilization by whites occurred at a time when many Americans viewed other people such as Irish, Jews, Poles, Blacks, and Italians in what we see today as prejudiced ways.

The Indians, because they were so different from any Europeans and resisted white settlement of America, were the victims of far-reaching stereotyping and "scientific" theorizing.

Here, for example, is an analysis of America's Indian "problem" written in 1890. As you read it think about the questions it raises:

CAN THE INDIANS BE CIVILIZED?

> The Indian question began with the settlement of America. The first settlers considered it from many points of view, but the final answer they all adopted was a crushing one--war as relentless as that waged by the savages themselves, until the Indians were either exterminated or driven away. The Indian question remains with us; can we give any other answer than that arrived at by our forefathers? The problem is primarily one that involves the effect of natural forces. All the world over, history teachers that whenever two races have come in contact, one has proved the dominant, the other the inferior people; and, sad though the fact be, the inferior race has been ground under the heel of the dominant race, till in time it has disappeared. The red race and the white have met in the United States; the operation of natural forces seems to have decreed that the red, the inferior race, must gradually die. Many earnest philanthropists have tried, and are still trying, to avert this doom from the Indians by teaching them the lessons of civilization. Unhappily, the results reached so far are not such as to justify an expectation of ultimate success.... Perhaps the utmost that has been demonstrated by philanthropists is that, by exercising firmness, kindness, and justice, the Indians may be prevented from indulging in frequent and terrible outbreaks.*

White Americans have, since their arrival in America, tended to see Indians in ways that suited their needs at particular times. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Europeans wanted the lands on which the Indians lived and, to some extent feared the Indians; so they looked on Indian cultures in ways that justified their occupation of the land and their conquest of the Indians. Indians were believed to be uncivilized savages, primitive people, who had to learn the ways of civilization. Europeans were not able to recognize that, just because America's Indians were a people with ways of life that were different, they were not necessarily less civilized.

Today few would agree with the views of that article quoted above, but stereotypes still affect too often the ways in which we see Indian Americans. Let's look at a modern day example of the effects of stereotypes. Presented first is a description of the background of the situation.

In 1973, a group of about 200 Indians occupied an Indian village, Wounded Knee, on the Pine Creek reservation in South Dakota. They did this to remind white Americans of their treatment of Indians in the past and to dramatize what they felt

*From a popular magazine of the early 1890's.

was America's obligation to act to ease the poverty and powerlessness of today's Indians. Many grievances of Indian Americans were represented at Wounded Knee. 54% of the people on the reservation at that time were unemployed; 70% of the people had no work in winter. Half of the population of the reservation was on welfare. Older men from the reservation remembered when they [illegible] beaten in its school for wearing Indian costumes and were made to eat soap for speaking Lakota, their Sioux language. Conditions like this were found on many reservations but Wounded Knee had an especially important place in the history of white-Indian relations. In 1890, (in the same week as the article we looked at earlier was published), a band of Indians, fleeing from the U. S. cavalry, sought refuge on the Pine Creek reservation. The band was surrounded while they were camped at Wounded Knee Creek; the cavalry, after training guns on the camp, demanded that the Indians come out of their teepees. Most of the Indians in the camp did so, but a shot was fired by somebody and, by nightfall, 153 Indians and 30 soldiers had been killed, the soldiers mostly by their own cross-fire. The Indian dead were buried in a mass grave at Wounded Knee marked by a single headstone, while eighteen soldiers were awarded Congressional Medals of Honor.

Here is part of a New York Times article on the implications of the modern occupation of Wounded Knee. Does the author show any stereotypes of Indian Americans? How might this article have affected readers of the newpaper?

Wounded Knee, S. D.

> In a scrubby valley here in this empty windswept plain country a band of young Indians and their allies are dug in, armed and painted for war while in the hill-sides around them a Federal force of armor and automatic weapons stands nervously.
>
> The impasse at Wounded Knee has already lasted more than three weeks. But behind it lies a century-long clash of values between a defeated Indian culture and a dominant white culture.
>
> It is a tragic and twisted history, and it takes in both the tribal officials in nearby Pine Ridge, with their closely cropped hair and triplicate government forms, and the long lines of Indian men who sit at the cross roads in the early spring sun, blankly watching the dust as white Justice Department officials, marshalls, lawyers and newsmen rush by.

Some of the 200 odd people here are from the reservation including a scattering of older, full-blooded men and women. Others have come in from Canada, Montana, Oklahoma, and California. They are angry with white society, responding to the stirring of Indian pride and trying to find their origins. But many are urban Indians, a long way from their roots.

When the Indians first began rustling cattle in the nearby fields for food, for instance, a group selected the largest cow for slaughter. Being with calf she proved to have little meat. The Indians shot the cow twice, but were unable to kill it. Finally, a television technician took a gun and shot the beast between the eyes. Then he took a knife and showed them how to skin and butcher it. *

We still tend to see Indians in ways that we are accustomed to, rather than in ways that mirror reality. Careful study is the only way we have to escape from simple-minded stereotypes and see Indian culture in America, and the present-day problems of Indians, as they were and are, not as we think they should or might have been.

This is our goal in this book. We want to look at the prehistory of Indian culture in America to see the ways in which Indian peoples learned to exploit the land in which they lived. We want to look at the course of Indian-white relations in America to explore what happened when a stone-age culture faced an acquisitive white culture that was more highly developed and had more resources than did Indian culture. We want also to examine the legacy of this contact which in large part has led to the problems of Indians today. We cannot understand the present without the past, and we cannot understand either unless we try to see more clearly than before.

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*New York Times. March 1, 1973.

CHAPTER II*

THE PAST OF AMERICA'S INDIANS

Nearly ten thousand years ago men left tools and debris in caves near the southern tip of South America. Most historians believe (although with almost no evidence) that these men came from Asia, using a land bridge that might have existed across the Bering Sea. Probably they spent another ten thousand or more years moving slowly from Alaska through North and Central America to the southernmost part of the continent. We do know that men have lived in North America through all of the last 15,000 years and that these men were the ancestors of present day Indian Americans. What kinds of life did these stone age hunters live? What changes took place for these prehistoric Indian Americans between the termination of the last Ice Age (around 16,000 B.C.) when they first came to the continent, and today? How did the ways of life of the Indians emerge which Columbus saw in the West Indies in 1492: the same questions can be asked about pueblo-living Hopi of New Mexico, the Kwakiutl fishermen of British Columbia, the buffalo-hunting Blackfoot, Apache, Comanche and Cheyenne of the Great Plains and the corn-growing Cherokee of Georgia and South Carolina, the Iroquois of New York, the Natchez of Mississippi, and the Miami of Indiana and Illinois.

We have no written record that can give us answers to these questions. Prehistory extends closer to the present day in America than in Europe, the Middle East, China and Japan because the Indian peoples of America, even the sophisticated Incas of Peru and Aztecs of Mexico, did not discover writing. To come to any understanding of their way of life before literate Europeans came to the continent we have to turn to archeology, the science which seeks information about the past by investigating the surviving relics of that past.

In this chapter we explore some of the facts that are known, as well as some of the guesses we must make, about the prehistory of a group of Indian Americans

*This chapter draws heavily upon James E. Fitting, ed., "The Schultz Site at Green Point: A Stratified Occupation Area in the Saginaw Valley of Michigan," Memoirs of the Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan, #2. See also James E. Fitting, Archeology of Michigan.

who lived near the Great Lakes. We do this by exploring carefully the findings of excavations of one Indian site, at Green Point on the Tittabawassee River near the present-day city of Saginaw, Michigan. The site is typical of many of the sites that American archeologists have dug and the methods that we use to explore the findings of the excavation are also typical. However, the results that came from this one excavation are relevant only to the prehistory of one Indian people. We are sacrificing generality to explore in detail the complex history of one particular Indian settlement --but this particularity is what American Indian archeology is all about. We will only understand what really happened in the past of the Indians, how they learned over centuries to live in their environment, by exploring many such individual sites and then piecing together the findings. Archeology is like a jig-saw puzzle that must be started from all sides at once; we must solve particular questions and, as we get answers to one set of questions, we must ask how these answers fit with what has been found from excavations of other sites.

Because the people who lived at Green Point did not leave great temples or forts, or houses of bricks and stones, the excavations described here will not be the same as that which would be undertaken by archeologists who were exploring an Inca or Aztec temple, or a Greek or Egyptian city. Instead, the archeologists who worked at the site were looking for little things from the past, such as stone tools that had been dropped onto the ground, lost, and left in the soil when the people moved on; bits of shell or bone that had been used to make tools; ashes from old fireplaces; bones from animals that had been slaughtered and eaten at the site; and the ornaments that the people buried with their dead. Remains of this kind are all that is left from the past at any site like Green Point, but by collecting these little things and analyzing them carefully we will see that a history can be told of a people, even though they themselves left no written record.

EXCAVATIONS AT GREEN POINT

Four rivers flow through the once heavily forested Saginaw Valley of Michigan--the Flint, the Cass, and the Siawassee from the south, and the Tittabawassee from the north. These rivers join at Green Point to become the Saginaw River, which then flows sluggishly into Lake Huron. We know that from about 1800 A. D. on,

Green Point was the site of an Indian camp. In 1881, one settler in the Valley wrote:

> Green Point was a favorite camping ground of Indians in olden times, and where they had their cornfields, quite a distance back from the river on the prairie, we discovered two very large mounds. I also saw one after it had been opened, and the whole interior appeared to be of a whitish substance, evidently of decomposed bones.*

Today Green Point is a flat field in which beans and wheat are growing, but if you walk across the field after it has been plowed, you can see hundreds of stone flakes, occasional stone and bone points, and old bones.

Many, many Indian artifacts were collected from the ground at Green Point in the early years of this century. In the 1920's however, the farmer who then owned the land at Green Point believed that a pot of silver was probably buried somewhere near the old mounds. He hoped to find this silver for himself and discouraged anybody from visiting the site; gradually both collectors and archeologists forgot about this old Indian village. By 1960 the mounds had been plowed away and the site had been almost completely forgotten.

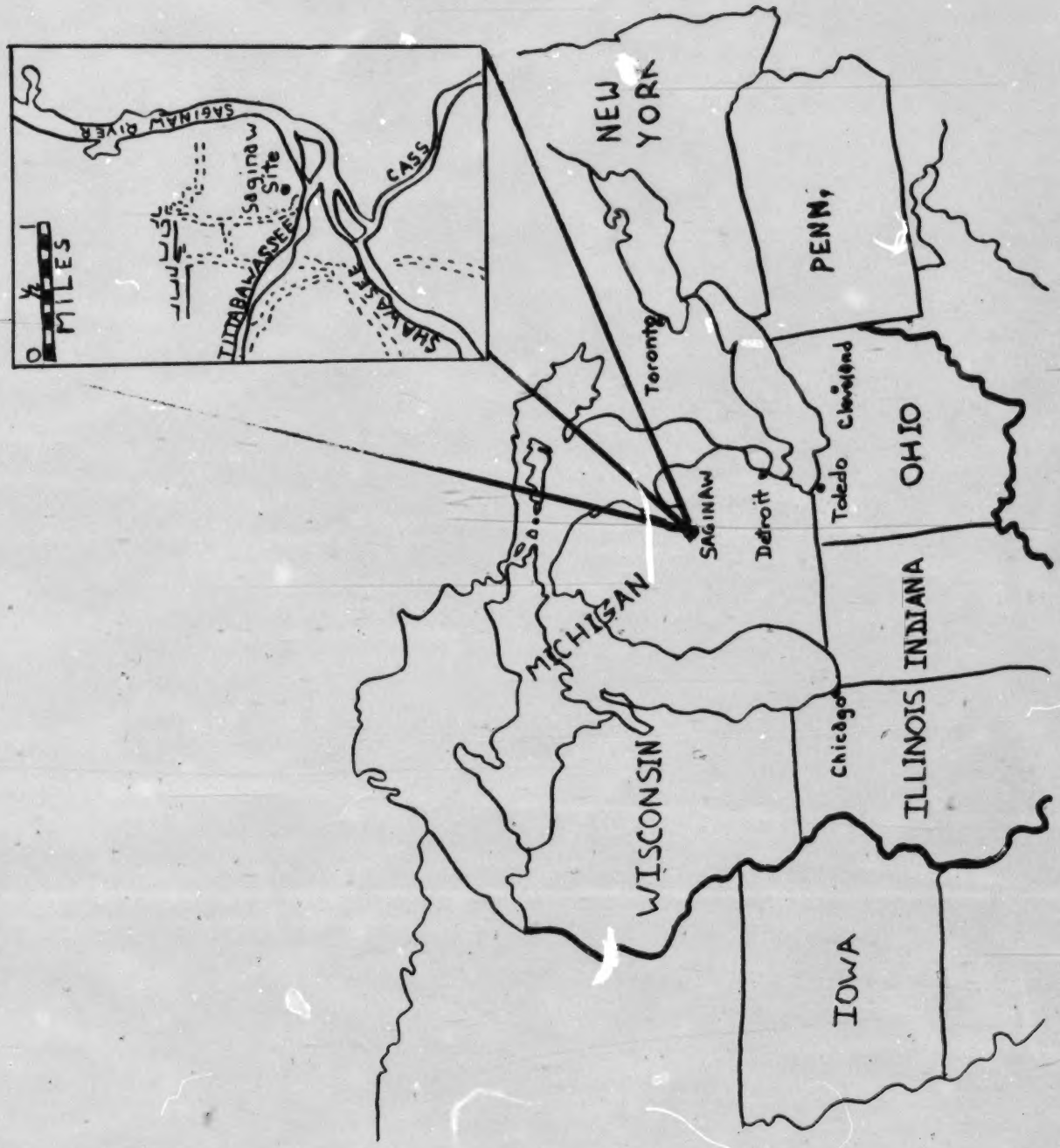
In July, 1962, after a survey of reports of old Indian sites in the Saginaw Valley, a party of archeologists from the Museum of Anthropology of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor went to Green Point to see what Indian remains might be there. They cut a trench along the east wall of a gully and found over seven feet of buried Indian remains. This find led them to spend the whole of the summer exploring what intensive excavation at Green Point might yield. During August, they commenced digging; they discovered 28 hearths, and refuse pits, and six post molds.** These findings were rich enough to bring the Museum's field parties back to Green Point (then called the Schultz site in honor of Mr. Reuben Schultz who owned the land) for three more years.

The Dig

Between June and August, 1963, a field party of seventeen archeologists

*William R. McCormick, "Mounds and Mound Builders of the Saginaw Valley" 1883. Quoted in J. E. Fitting, ed. "The Schultz Site at Green Point," Memoirs of the Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan, 4, 1972, p. 5.

**post molds: holes dug in the ground to hold stakes or posts.



Green Point in the Midwest--adapted from James E. Fitting, ed. "The Schultz Site at Green Point," Memoirs of the Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan, 4, 1972, p. 60.

returned to the Schultz site to continue the excavations that had been begun the year before. Their main excavations centered around a line of post molds that had been found the year before. They shoveled off the soil near the surface searching for new post molds. By the end of the season they had uncovered 128 post molds about 3 feet apart forming a stockade 150 feet in diameter, as well as 74 additional pits, hearths, and concentrations of artifacts.

In 1964, a new field party from the Museum returned to the Schultz site. They dug a series of 20 by 20 foot units joined by a 230 foot long, 5 foot wide trench that ran straight across the circle left by the post molds. Luckily, this trench penetrated a low rise directly behind the stockade which turned out to be made by man. This was one of the long-lost mounds. Excavations were undertaken in this mound and revealed parts of seven skulls and the teeth of sixteen different individuals.

In 1965, the last field party to dig at Green Point came to the site to investigate the last of the three mounds that were once at the site. During three days in August, two trenches and a 20 by 20 foot unit were opened at the center of the mound, but no burials and only a few sherds* were found. However, there was an old hearth, a charred log, and about 200 shells beneath the floor of this mound near its center.

ANALYZING THE FINDINGS FROM THE EXCAVATION

When an archeologist digs a site he destroys it. Once a site has been excavated, it can never be dug again. Archeological excavation must be slow and careful; rapid digging can cause an archeologist to miss a valuable clue like a little cluster of charcoal that may once have been a fireplace, or a small patch of slightly hardened earth--all that is left of an old post or house. All of the soil that is dug from a site has to be sieved to pick up small artifacts and the pieces of seeds, nut, or bone that can tell us what the people who lived at a site ate. Even the shape of old fireplaces must be carefully noted and photographed so that nothing might be lost--forever--when the site is filled in after an excavation.

An important feature of a site that concerns every archeologist as he digs is

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*sherds: broken pieces of pots.

stratification. Archeological sites were built up over many years as trash of one kind or another is dropped and covered by other trash: a stone tool, for example, might be dropped, and pressed into the ground by a pile of garbage. It is bits and pieces of this kind that make a site interesting. The deeper a piece of debris, the older it is.

At Schultz mud left from floods, and the debris left by the Indians who lived at the site, became layers of different colored soils. These layers could be seen on the wall of the trenches that were dug by the excavators, and by following these layers along the wall of the main trench, the archeologists were able to build up a picture of the main features of the site. This layering was then used to keep track of when tools and potsherds, or bits of bone and nut were dropped by the people who once lived at the site. Even though tools might be found buried three feet deep at one place in a site and four feet deep at another, they were probably buried about the same time if they are found in the same stratum or level. If we did not know how the site was stratified, what could happen to data from different periods? A look at some of the evidence found helps answer this question.

The Stockade

As we saw, the first major discovery at the Schultz site was the circle of 128 post molds. All of these molds were found in one stratum (Illa) of the site. When we mentioned the molds earlier we called the circle a "stockade;" would "stockade" have been the right word to describe the post molds if they had been found in several strata?

The Pits and Hearths

We can see how important it is to know exactly where all the finds discovered in a site were located by looking at some of the findings from the Schultz excavation. Pits dug by the Indians who lived at Green Point and the remains of old fireplaces (hearths) were found scattered all through the site. After looking at what was found in these pits, and at their different shapes, the archeologists at the site identified several types of pits: oval, round, and circular.

1*

3

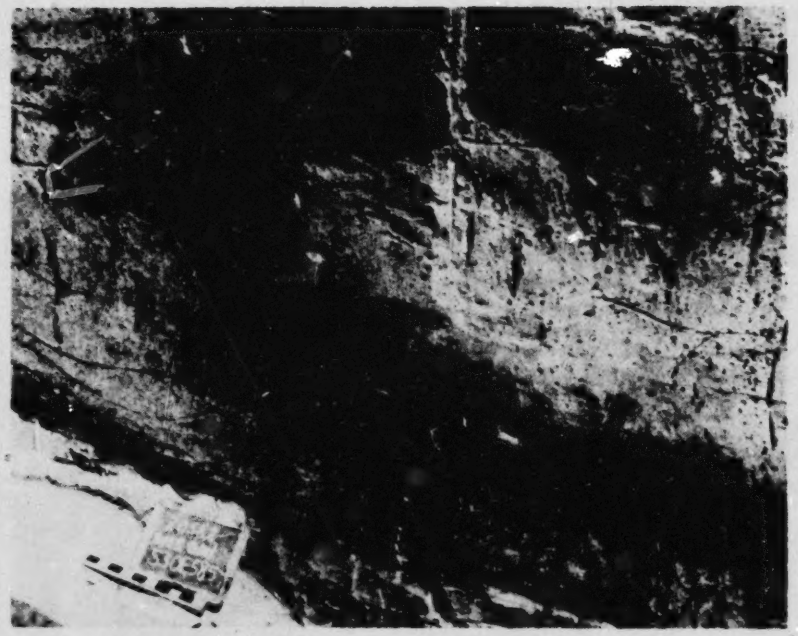
2

1. Excavations at Green Point.

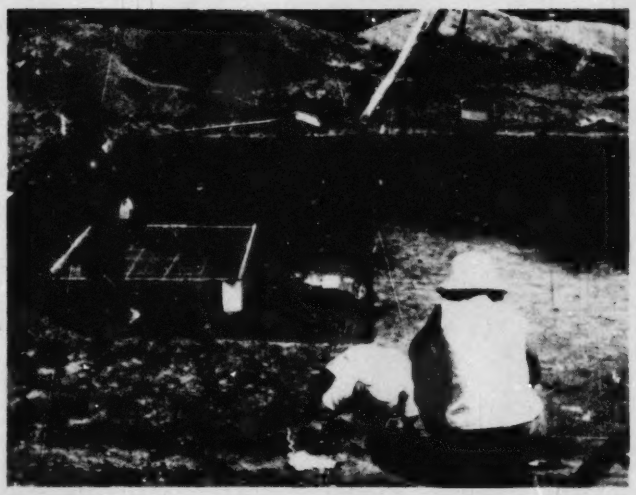
2. Main Trench.

3. Sieving the soil from a section of the site.

*Green Point trenches from Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan.



4. East Wall of 1964 Main Trench (Notice the clearly visible strata in the soil).



5. Excavating a Square (Notice the way in which the positions of finds are located).

*Green Point trenches from Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan.

Section of Main Trench*

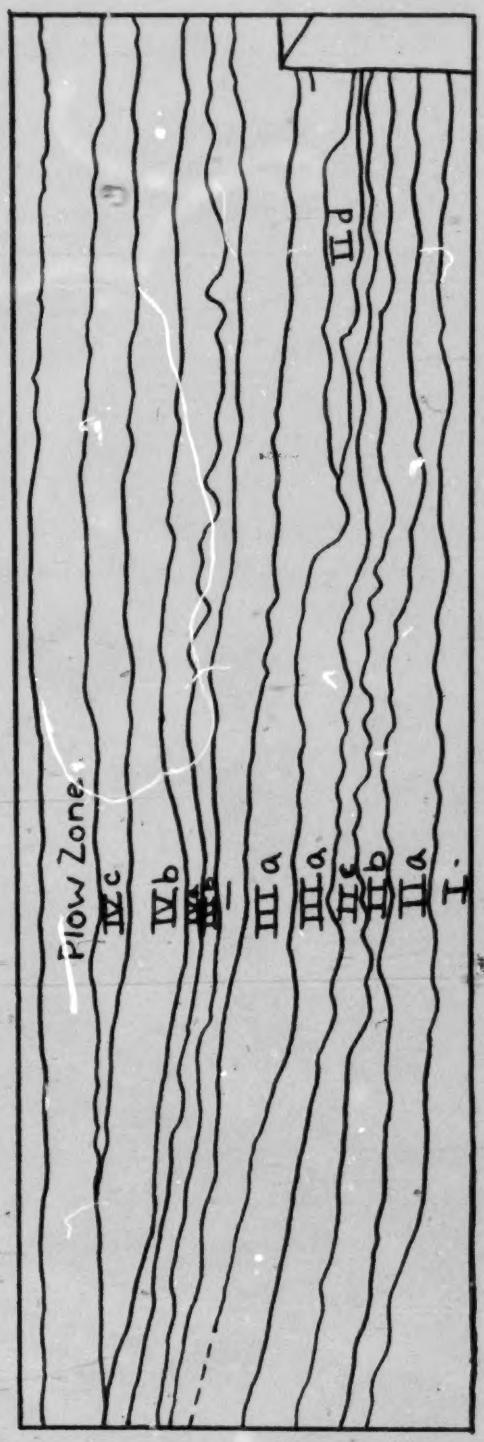


*Diagram adapted from James E. Fitting, ed. "The Schultz Site at Green Point," Memoirs of the Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan, 4, 1972, p. 60.

Food Remains at the Schultz Site

Many of the pits at Green Point had fish and animal bones in them. Hundreds of thousands of bits and pieces of fish, animal bones, and turtle and mollusk shells were found all through the soil at the site. All of this bone and shell was carefully collected during the digging and stored in bags according to the place and level in which it was found. After excavation, all the bone and shell fragments were examined by zoologists to see how many pieces could be identified by species. 3,160 pieces of animal bone, 14,172 pieces of fish bone, 297 pieces of turtle shell, and 16,000 mollusk shells could be identified in this way. In addition, the number of individual animals, fish, turtles, and shell fish that the bones and shells came from was worked out and, using these figures, the approximate amount of meat on the creatures whose bones were discovered could be calculated. Remains of different kinds of fish give us specific clues that suggest reasons for the intensive occupation of Green Point at a particular level or stratum. Fish bones found include those of sturgeon, drum, walleyed pike, channel catfish and bullhead--all spring and summer fish. What does the importance of fish in the diet of these Indians and our knowledge of the season they came into the river suggest about the reasons for Indian settlement at Green Point during that time?

Potsherds from the Schultz Site

In addition to these food remains 18,716 individual pieces from broken clay pots were found during the four years of excavation of the Schultz site. As each of these pieces was uncovered by excavation the place on the site and the level at which each sherd was found was carefully noted and each sherd was put in its own plastic bag. At the end of each season all of these pot fragments were taken back to the laboratory in Ann Arbor and stored. At the end of the dig each of the pieces was washed and then examined to see how and from what kind of clay the piece was made; how thick the original pot might have been; and what kind of decoration was found on each sherd. With this data in hand the first task of the archeologists was to decide how many different types of pots were made by the Indians of Green Point. This search for kinds of pots was successful. There were four main classes of pots (or wares) among the Schultz finds.

Pots are different from almost anything else found in archeological sites. Archeologists use differences in the kinds of potsherds found in sites to develop hunches about the relative age of sites. The kinds of pots that the American Indians made changed at different times. And when a pot style changed at one place it also tended to change at other places at about the same time. Somebody would get a bright idea somewhere about a different kind of pot (or a different kind of car or dress--the same kind of thing happens now all the time and we call it change in fashion) and in a short time, if it was a useful idea, the new style of pot appeared in many places.

Pots similar in style to the Schultz Green Point ware have been found in sites in southwestern Michigan, in Ohio, and in Illinois. Pots of this kind always appear in strata that are dated between 200 B.C. and 500 A.D. On many of the sites there are burial mounds similar to those found at Green Point and elaborate graves with many artifacts and ornaments buried in them. Often these sites are large and very complex; at one site in southern Michigan there were twenty-two circular mounds with oblong burial pits below them. In the graves there was a vast collection of artifacts--cut wolf jaws, cut sheet mica, stone blades, arrow heads, gorgets* and pottery vessels. This Indian culture with its characteristic pots and elaborate burial customs, seemingly the marks of a religion, has been called the Hopewell culture. Can we assume from the similarity between Green Point at this time and these other sites that Green Point was a Hopewell meeting place?

Most archeologists believe that the elaborate religious life of the Hopewell period could not have come about without a source of food like corn. People who had to hunt for most of their food could not have assembled in the large numbers that would have been required to build the mounds of the Hopewell religion. Farmers who stayed in one place to plant, cultivate and store this grain had the time to build mounds and to participate in complicated Hopewellian religious ceremonies. But, there was no evidence of corn-growing at the Schultz site. What was the main source of food at Green Point during the Hopewell period? Can we explain this difference? A fishing camp is, in some ways, like a little farming community. Perhaps we could

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*gorgets: pieces of neck armor.

say that Hopewell people spread from the south into Michigan, and finding that they could not grow corn, turned to fishing instead. This explanation was plausible, but too simple, as the study of the distribution of pots in northeastern America can tell us.

There are archeological sites all through the Great Lakes region from Wisconsin, into Manitoba and Ontario in Canada, which were summer fishing camps just like Schultz. Some of these sites contained wares similar to those of the Illinois Hopewellian period, and to those of the sites in Canada, New England, and northern Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and New York. These latter sites have neither mounds nor Hopewellian pottery although many of them were spring and summer fishing camps like Schultz.

What does this mean for our understanding of the Indians of Green Point in the mound-building Hopewellian period? On the one hand they seem to have lived in ways that were similar to Indians of the northern forests of Canada, but, on the other hand, they built mounds and made pots like the Indians of Illinois and Ohio. All this suggests a people whose patterns of food gathering were similar to people known to be in the north but who also adopted some features from the cultures of the people to the south. But is this all that these finds tell us? Before we answer this question let us look briefly at what happened at Green Point after the Hopewellian period.

The Prehistory of Green Point after the Hopewell Period

We can get some clues about what happened at the Green Point site after the end of the Hopewell period from what we have already learned about the site. What happened to the stockade that must have been so important for Hopewellian religious ceremonies? What changes took place in the food that the people ate? We can guess that there were fewer people at the site than there had been during Hopewellian times, because there were fewer pots and much less food material left there.

But, while we can answer these questions from what we already know about the site, a little thinking about what this means leaves us with more questions than we have answers. What happened to all the people who came to Green Point to fish during the Hopewellian times? Why did the religious ceremonies that were so

important in the earlier levels of the site end after about 600 A. D. ? And what happened after about 1300 A. D. ? There was no evidence of any occupation of the site after that date. We have mentioned that in historic times Green Point was an important Chippewa village; what happened to the site between 1300 A. D. when we know there were at least some people living there, and the 1700's when there was a Chippewa village at Green Point? It would seem from the archeological evidence we have seen so far that after about 600 A.D. Green Point was gradually abandoned as the site of a significant Indian village--but we get no clues that can tell us why this happened from the Schultz site. However, we can get some answers to this "why" question from what archeologists know about other Indian sites of the Saginaw Valley.

Geological studies conducted at the same time as the excavation at Schultz suggest that there was an increase in flooding by the Tittabawassee River about 600 A. D. ; this may have made Green Point uninhabitable and may have forced the Hopewell people to move away from the site. However, this period of flooding probably ended about 800 A. D. ; why didn't the people come back when Green Point was dry again?

To answer this question we have to turn back to a study of the potsherds found at Green Point and other sites in the valley. Saginaw thin ware is found in a number of sites in the Saginaw Valley which suggests that all of these sites were inhabited at about the same time as the Schultz site. But at all of these sites there was a decline in the number of people and all of the sites seem to have been small hunting camps rather than densely populated villages. Mammals were always the most important source of food at these sites. There is also very little evidence of occupation after 1300, and there were more stone tools than pots at these sites. (Archeologists often use the ratio between stone tools and pots as evidence for the numbers of men and women at a site--they believe that men used the stone tools for activities like hunting; while pots were for the women, who did the cooking and storing of food).

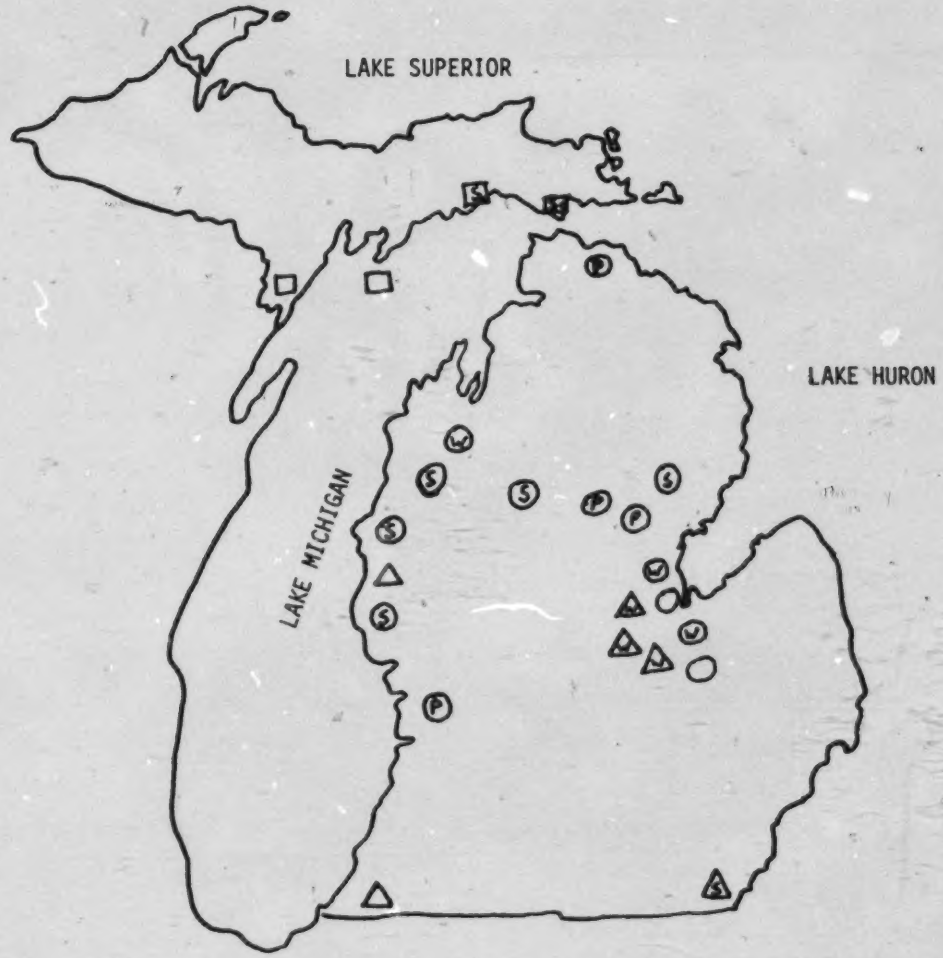
When Europeans first made contact with the Indians of the Great Lakes region among the tribes living here were the Chippewa, the Ottawa, the Miami, and Potawatomi. The Chippewa were found in the north, around the upper Great Lakes.

They practiced no agriculture and lived by hunting and fishing alone. In the winter they lived in small family groups, hunting fur-bearing animals and deer; in the spring some of the small groups came together to collect maple syrup and make sugar, and in the summer many of these family bands congregated in places like Sault Ste. Marie to fish. This was the same pattern of movement that the Hopewell people of the Green Point represented--Green Point was the summer fishing camp where many family groups assembled each spring.

The Ottawa were first found living in lower Michigan. They grew corn and lived in villages made up of clusters of bark-covered lodges. Each village was surrounded by fields which were cultivated by the women. The men left the village regularly in hunting and trading parties; in summer some groups of men would go north to trade with the Chippewa exchanging corn for furs, while other groups went to the shores of Lakes Michigan and Huron to hunt for meat. In winter small hunting parties left their villages to set up small camps where they caught deer, bear and beaver to take back to their village.

The Miami lived further south than the Ottawa. There were Miami villages in Michigan, near Detroit, in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. In historic times these villages were permanent and surrounded by fields of corn, beans, squash, melons, and gourds which all the people--men and women--tended during the summer months. The men only left these villages for short periods of hunting during the summer and always returned in time for the harvest. In fall, after the harvest, the entire village broke up and the men, women and children all dispersed to winter hunting camps.

When we link kinds of Indian settlement patterns with the kinds of vegetation zones found in the Great Lakes region in this way, we are suggesting that Indian settlement patterns are adaptive to climatic zones. We are saying that, just as animals adapt to their environment, so men adopt styles of life that are adaptive to their environment; the ways of life of the Chippewa, Ottawa, Potawatomi, and Miami allowed each of these Indian groups to exploit their environments efficiently. The Saginaw Valley fit into this pattern of adaptation; in the prehistoric period the valley was a buffer zone between the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi-Miami zones. The valley was left unoccupied by all of these people so that groups from any of the three zones could exploit its rich resources as they needed them. Chippewa groups spent part of



□ = Chippewa sites

○ = Ottawa

△ = Miami-Potawatomi

w = winter camp
s = summer camp
p = permanent camp

LATE PREHISTORIC SITES OF MICHIGAN
700-1600 A.D.

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a winter hunting in the valley, groups of men from Ottawa villages came to the Valley at other times to hunt, and Potawatomi groups used it at still other times. While the Valley was not occupied, it was used--and more people through the whole Great Lakes region could be supported efficiently by keeping parts of the region, like the Saginaw Valley, unoccupied, and consequently available for different Indian groups at different times. It was the development of a pattern of this kind that was one of the Indian's achievements in America.

Changes in the Way of Life of the Indians of Michigan

Thus we know from dates determined by studying the Schultz and other sites in the Saginaw Valley that the Indians of the Great Lakes began using, instead of occupying the Valley about 1300. Because we know something about Indian life in the Great Lakes region during the 1700's we can make some suggestions about the patt patterns of occupation of Green Point through its history. Can we explain these changes?

Excavations of other sites in the Saginaw Valley have given us an understanding of the patterns of occupation that lets us answer these questions. The people who lived at Green Point in winter were at other places during the summer; the Kantzler site near Saginaw Bay was the summer camp of the people who lived at Green Point during winter in the Level II period at Schultz. During this period the Indians of the Saginaw Valley moved to the shores of Lake Huron for fishing in the summer, then inland to Green Point for hunting in the winter. In Level III, during the Hopewell period in the Valley when many people gathered at Green Point to fish and participate in religious festivals Kantzler was the site of a small camp occupied during the winter by a few families.

On the next page we summarize all the changes in movement of Indian families between Green Point and the lakeshore that took place over the whole of the two thousand years that Indians lived in the Saginaw Valley. Why, through the whole of these two thousand years did Indian families move from place to place every summer and winter? The answer to this question is clear. Even today the Great Lakes region is a harsh land with snow every winter; in the northern parts of Michigan farming is difficult and unreliable. To live in this cold land the Indians had to find

THE GREEN POINT AND KANTZLER SITES

Green Point		Kantzler
Small camps, winter camp (?) nuts and hunting	600 BC	Small summer camp? fishing
Extensive camp occupied in winter hunting		Small summer camp fishing
Little known about occupation small temporary camps (?)	500 BC	Small temporary camps
Summer occupation, increasingly large population--hunting and increasingly, fishing--much ritual activity	100 BC	Small camps--winter occupation--fishing, and, increasingly, hunting
Sporadic occupation--no seasonal pattern--both hunting and fishing	600 AD	Small hunting camp
Abandoned	1300 AD	Abandoned

ways of securing reasonably reliable sources of food. By moving from place to place, from a hunting camp in the winter to a fishing camp in the summer, the prehistoric Indians of the region could provide themselves with the food they needed to live. But, if this is so, why did the annual patterns of movement from place to place change over time? And what do these changes mean? We can only guess at an answer to this question, but the guesses that have been made are intriguing.

In the earliest period of Indian settlement of the Great Lakes region there was very little difference between the ways of life we see represented at sites in Michigan, Ohio, and Illinois. Everywhere small bands of Indians moved from place to place for short periods of time collecting nuts at one site, catching fish at another, and hunting at another. Bands stayed together throughout the year and moved around in the same area for long periods. In the Saginaw Valley it was likely that there was a band of twenty or so Indians moving between Green Point and the lakeshore every summer, fall, winter and spring, using the resources that were abundant at one place for a time and then moving to another place to exploit the resources that were available there. Their living patterns were the

same although the regions in which individual bands lived were very different.

By 1700, when Europeans came to the Great Lakes, all this had changed. There were considerable differences between the living patterns of tribes in Illinois and Ohio and those of northern Michigan. There was specialization in the economies of different regions and trading between regions--corn from the south was traded northwards in exchange for the furs of the north--and there was even a nation of Indians (the Ottawa) who specialized in trade and depended for part of their livelihood on its profits. Rather than simply using the resources of small areas to secure the resources necessary for life, these people utilized the materials of whole regions; each differently. And, as a result of this pattern of regional exploitation, people were able to live in permanent villages getting the things they needed from other tribes with the surpluses they grew. The Hopewellian phase at Green Point was probably part of this transformation. Other peoples could hunt knowing that they could get the corn they needed in exchange for furs that they could collect so easily. All of the changes that took place in the intervening period represented successive attempts to work out more efficient ways to live so that man would have to spend less of his energy collecting the food he needed for basic survival.

It was patterns of this kind, patterns that evolved over almost a thousand years to permit man to cope with a harsh environment, that were destroyed by the European occupation of America. Europeans brought to America tools and resources that the Indians of America did not have. The injection of these new resources into the lives of America's Indians destroyed their traditional, and hard-won patterns. The Indian way of life was too fragile to cope with this invasion by men who offered new forms of wealth to Indian tribes and who had developed stronger institutions than Americans had ever known before. In two hundred years the ways of life of prehistoric Indian America were gone. Let us turn now to look at the record of that destruction of an old way by a new.

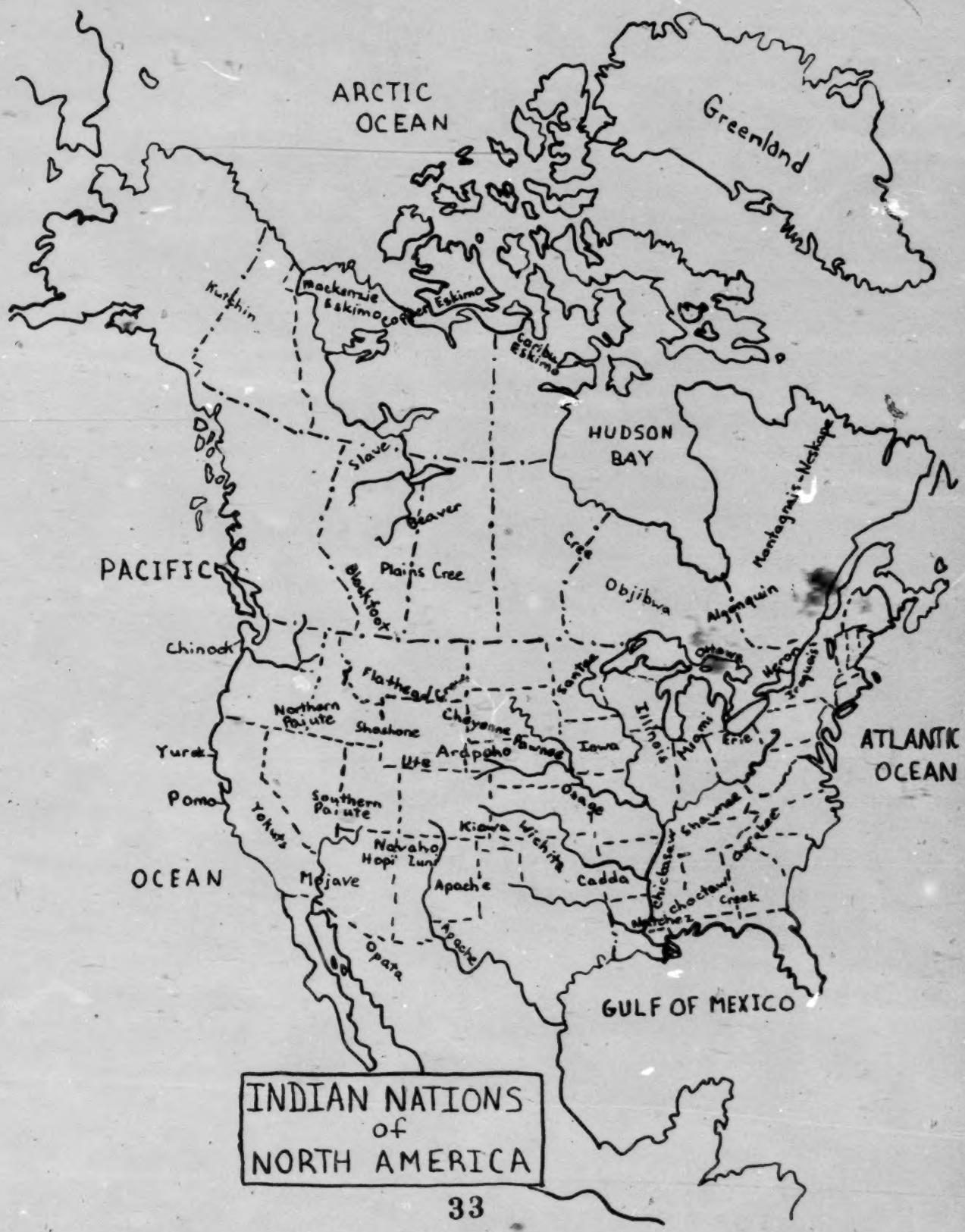
CHAPTER III

AMERICA'S INDIANS AND THEIR EUROPEAN CONQUERORS

Europeans came to America almost immediately after its discovery to look for gold, to fish in the waters off the north-east coast, and to convert the Indian peoples of America to Christianity. From the first day of contact between Europeans and America's Indians the traditional ways of life of the Indian people changed. The sailors who crossed the Atlantic to both North and Central America had on their small boats many things that Indian civilization lacked: iron pots, kettles, knives, and muskets. The Indians wanted these things and soon learned that they could get them by trading with the crews of the ships that came close to the coast. When Jacques Cartier, for example, came into the Gulf of St. Lawrence in 1534, he met two fleets of canoes from which the Indians (in his words) "made frequent signs to us to come on shore, holding up to us some furs on sticks." Later "they sent on shore part of their people with some of their furs; and the two parties traded together. The savages showed a marvelously great pleasure in possessing, and obtained these iron wares and other commodities, dancing and going through many ceremonies."*

At first the rich Europeans who sent ships from Spain, France, or England to fish or plunder in America were not interested in trade with the Indians. However, the sailors on the ships were interested; they bartered biscuits, lead, rope, or sails that they stole from their ships in return for fur or ornaments. But, in the second half of the sixteenth century America had one of its first effects on Europe. The wearing of beaver hats was fashionable, and beaver pelts became as valuable in Europe as fish. Traders came to America, learned the languages and customs of the Indians, and encouraged them to hunt for the beaver fur by offering iron goods and muskets that the Indians wanted. Iron pots, knives, arrow heads, muskets, and cloth flooded into America--although never in large enough quantities to satisfy Indian demands. In a few years the way of life of America's Indian peoples, particularly those of the east coast, was changed. A revolution took place: new cultural

*Quoted in Harold A. Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1930, p. 6.



INDIAN NATIONS of NORTH AMERICA

forms brought about a different adaptation between the Indian people of America and an environment that now included Europe. That adaptation was as significant for Indian civilization as the discovery of corn which had made it possible to live in permanent villages.

Here is a description, written in 1642, of the changes that had taken place since the arrival of Europeans in the patterns of life of one group of Indians living near the Gulf of St. Lawrence. As you read this, notice the reasons the writer gave for the speed with which these Indians adopted the tools that Europe brought them.

> They have abandoned all their utensils, whether because of the trouble they had as well to make as to use them, or because of the facility of obtaining from us, in exchange for skins which cost them almost nothing, the things which seemed to them invaluable, not so much for their novelty as for the convenience they derived therefrom.
>
> They practice still all the same methods of hunting, with this difference, however, that in place of arming their arrows and spears with the bones of animals, pointed and sharpened, they arm them today with iron, which is made expressly for sale to them.
>
> The musket is used by them more than all other weapons, in their hunting in spring, summer, and autumn, both for animals and birds. . . With the arrow it was necessary to approach an animal closely: with the gun they kill the animal from a distance with a bullet or two. The axes, the kettles, the knives and everything that is supplied them, are much more convenient and portable than those which they had in former times. *

Once Indians had used the goods the Europeans brought to America they never willingly gave them up. Trade with Europeans became a necessity, with the result that even the thought that the trading posts might be closed became something to be feared. Here is a part of a speech made in 1687 by Onanguisset, a Potawatomi chief, opposing a suggestion by the French that they should close a post that was close to his village:

> Since we want powder, iron, and every other necessary which you were formerly in the habit of sending us, what do you expect us to do (if you close your trading posts)? Having in our country none of the

*Nicholas Denys, The Description and Natural History of the Coasts of North America (1672), cited in Harold Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1930, pp. 15-16.

articles we require and which you, last year, promised we should be furnished with, and not want; you shall never see us again. *

Onanguisset went on to threaten the French that if they abandoned their post near his village, he would begin trading with the British and the French traders and missionaries who came to his lands as well as tribes who still traded with the French. This was a powerful threat not only because it involved the lives of Frenchmen, but also because the French needed the furs that Onanguisset's people brought to their posts. If Onanguisset traded his furs with the English they would get the profits from the trade, not the French.

Threats of the kind Onanguisset made in this speech were often carried out. Both the French and the English wanted furs and could only get them by attracting the loyalty of Indian tribes. Inevitably, each nation tried to outbid the other to secure the furs of the Indians. When promises of money and goods failed to get them what they wanted, they turned to war in the hope that military success would gain them exclusive rights to the trade of whole regions of the American wilderness. But long before the French and the English began their struggle for control of North America and even before whites had penetrated the forests surrounding the Great Lakes, the search for the furs that Indians needed if they were to have Europeans goods had led to terrible wars between some Indian tribes themselves. These wars were almost as significant as the activities of Europeans in destroying at least parts of America's traditional Indian civilization. Let us look at part of this story of destruction of Indian civilization first by Indians and later by Europeans and Americans.

The Wars and the Diplomacy of the Iroquois

In the first years of the seventeenth century the Iroquois was a confederation of six small Indian nations living in the highlands of what is now New York state. They had so little power of their own that they paid tribute to another Indian nation, the Mohicans, who lived near the site of the present-day Plymouth, Massachusetts. In the early 1620's the Iroquois won access in their own right to the Dutch traders of the Hudson River. The trade that followed was profitable: in 1626, the Iroquois

*Edmund B. O'Callaghan ed., Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York. Albany, N.Y., 1855, V, p. 673.

traded 7,250 beaver skins and 800 otter skins with the Dutch; in 1633, they had 30,000 skins to sell. With the profits of this trade the Iroquois were able to buy almost as many European goods as they wished, but this extensive trade in beaver skins soon seriously reduced the numbers of beaver in the territory--and by 1640, there was no beaver to be found. After fourteen years of profitable trade the Iroquois were suddenly without the skins they needed to get more iron tools and guns.

The only solution to the problems the Iroquois faced was to tap the seemingly unlimited supplies of beaver and otter in the rivers around the Great Lakes, but the trade in this region was controlled by the Hurons who lived between Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay, and went to the French colonies along the St. Lawrence River. In 1642, after failing to negotiate access to the riches of the Huron's trading territory, a band of Iroquois attacked a small Huron village. This attack marked the beginning of seven years of skirmishes between the Hurons and the Iroquois. By 1649, the Huron nation had been detroyed, and the Iroquois won access to the trade they needed.

In the years after 1650, the Iroquois extended their control of the trade routes to the west, and kept the French from establishing direct connections with tribes formerly allied with the Hurons, but that did not entirely solve the problems of the Iroquois.

Some Canadian tribes still traded with the French, and because their homeland was so far from the territory they sought to dominate, the Iroquois could not completely control their newly won trade. In 1654 and 1656, large fleets of canoes again converged on Montreal with the furs that the Iroquois thought should come to them. All through the 1650's, the Iroquois were forced continually to raid and fight the people of the north.

But, each time the Iroquois sent their bands of warriors into New France and stopped the St. Lawrence trade, the French became more determined to end the Iroquois threat. They almost succeeded in bringing about the downfall of the Iroquois in the early 1660's when an epidemic of smallpox afflicted the Iroquois and thousands died. Rival tribes from both the north and the south used the opportunity that this epidemic afforded to attack the Iroquois. The success of the raids by the Susquehannah tribe in particular encouraged them to pursue the Iroquois even more

aggressively and, in each of the following years, Iroquois traders were regularly attacked by the Susquehannah and occasionally successfully by the French.

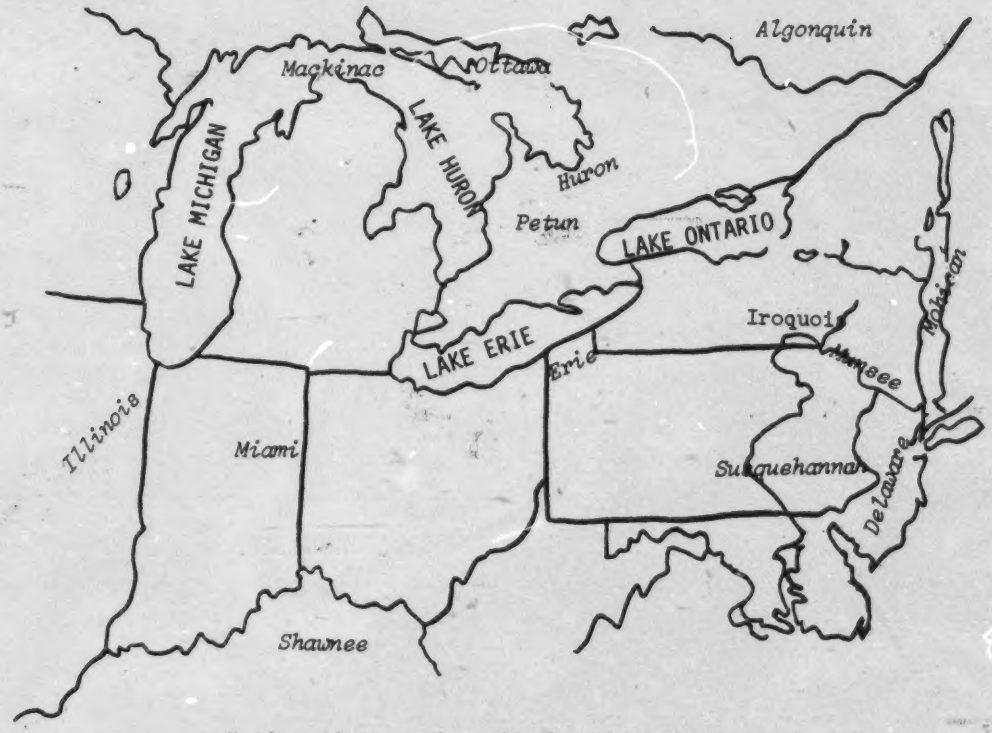
With the defeat of the Susquehannah in 1675, thirty-five years of war between other Indian nations came to a temporary halt. Now the French threatened the Iroquois by ignoring the truce negotiated in 1667, and attempting to re-establish direct links with the west; break the Iroquois trade with New York and Albany, and tie the fur trade closer and closer to Montreal. French posts were built around the Great Lakes, with each post linking the inland more tightly with Montreal and, at the same time, threatening the Iroquois influence in the west. And as each new post bound the fur trade of the inland more and more tightly with Montreal, the French began to plan for new attacks on the Iroquois homeland. The Iroquois tried to counter this danger by seeking closer alliances with the English, but this policy did not work: it caused the French to be more intent on breaking the power of the Iroquois while, at the same time, it led the English to claim that the supposed assistance that they were offering the Iroquois made them "subjects" of the English king.

These claims of the English and French posed a new and real problem for the Iroquois. They had known for many years that both the French and the English claimed to rule them, but each time the claim was made the Indians rejected it. In 1688, this same issue was raised in the course of negotiations for a treaty with the French and was again rejected by the Iroquois. Here is an extract from a document describing these negotiations.

Declaration of the Iroquois in presence of Monsieur de Denonville
at Montreal, 15th June 1688

> They wished only to be friends of the French and English, equally, without either the one or the other being their masters, because they held their country directly of God, and had never been conquered in war, neither by the French nor the English, and that their intention was only to observe a perfect neutrality...*

*Ibid. IX, pp. 384-385.



Nations destroyed or displaced by the Iroquois
in the Wars of the Iroquois*

*From William N. Fenton, "The Iroquois in History," in Eleanor Leacock and Nancy Lurie, ed., North American Indians in Historical Perspective, (Random House, 1971), p. 131.

The English Colonies, New France and the Iroquois

But, for the Europeans in America the more pressing question was who should dominate America. Both the English and the French assumed that they had a right to the land and the riches of America and that the Indians of America were their subjects. When convenient, the Iroquois would go along with the claims, but most often they would reject them. As the French and English presence in America grew stronger the demand that the Iroquiois should accept English or French sovereignty grew more and more insistent. Thus, increasingly, in the years after the 1688 conference, the Iroquois began to feel that it was more important to preserve their independence than fight with the French to secure furs, and so be forced into the arms of the English.

A war between France and England had broken out in the 1690's, ending with a peace treaty in 1698. Almost as soon as they heard of the peace, the governors of New France and New York started squabbling about whether the Iroquois were subjects of England and France. In 1700, six Iroquois delegates traveled to Montreal to tell the French that they wished to make a lasting peace with New France. At the same time as the delegates were in Montreal negotiating this treaty, another party of Iroquois were in Albany New York negotiating a peace treaty with the English. The English governor told the Iroquois delegates:

> I wonder that I have not heard of (plans of the French for peace with the Iroquois) and that you are not more zealous to oppose their building a Forte at Tjughsaghrondie als Wawyachtenek the principle pass where all your Beaver hunting is. You can never expect to hunt beaver any more in peace if you let them fortifie themselves at that principle pass, if you are minded to secure your posterity from slavery and bondage, hinder itt...
>
> Itt would seem by proposals I have lately heard were made att Canada that there has been some overtures of trade offer'd, which I can not believe. *

The Iroquois leaders listened to this speech politely. They wanted an alliance with both the English and the French so were not prepared to do anything themselves

*Louis A. Lahontan, New Voyages to North America, edited by Reuben G. Thwaites, Chicago, 1905, I, 82.

to annoy the French, even though the French were building forts and trading posts on land that was traditionally theirs. So their reply to the English was diplomatic but firm: if the English did not like their alliance with the French and the expansion of French influence in Iroquoia they could stop the French themselves. They were trying to foment trouble between Europeans but keep themselves out of any difficulties that might have resulted. Here is their reply, one that would in its careful ambiguity put the best of modern diplomats to shame.

> Brother Corlaer*--Wee complain of the French of Canada's incroaching upon our territories and that they goe and build forts upon our land without our consent, Wee pray that the great King of England may be acquainted with itt, and that he will be pleased to take care to prevent itt...
>
> Brother Corlaer--The Governor of Canada has sent a party of men who are gone behind our Country privately to build a Forte att Tjughsaghrondie you are desirious to know what wee have done in that case, Your people that have been att Onnondage can tell you--
> --Wee thought this Governt would have done something in the matter and to have found you busy in your books and mapps (meaning that the line should be run between the two Governts) wee can doe no thing in that case you know, wee have not power to resist such a Christian enemy, therefore wee must depend upon you Brother Corlaer to take this case in hand and acquaint the great King with itt for what will become of us att this rate where shall wee hunt a beaver if the French of Canada take possession of our beaver country...**

The settlement of 1701 was a compromise by the Iroquois--but one that gave them the access they wanted to the furs of the west and at the same time guaranteed their independence of both the French and the English. Each of the European powers agreed to protect the Iroquois from threats on their territory and independence by the other, leaving them free to trade with whomever would give them the highest price for their furs. Everyone was, to some extent, satisfied.

The peace of 1701 between the Iroquois, the French, and the English lasted for sixty years. During these years the Iroquois lived in peace, prospering as a semi-independent nation occupying a buffer zone between New York and New France.

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*Brother Corlaer: term of address Indians used for governor of New York. It means "Your Excellency."

**Lahontan, New Voyages, I, 84.

This peace ended in 1759 with the defeat of New France by England, a defeat that the Iroquois could not prevent. It was only a lucky chance that made it possible for England's General Wolfe to capture Quebec and so bring about the incorporation of Canada into the English empire in America. And, with France defeated, there was no longer a balance of power for the Iroquois to hold, and so escape encirclement by the English. All the Iroquois could do was delay this incorporation and, using the skills they had been exercising for so long, exploit the growing differences between the English and their American colonists for their advantage. This policy worked for a time but, as happened so many times in America, events over which the Indians had no control defeated them: the American colonies rebelled against their English rulers and the Iroquois had to make a decision about which side they should support. They chose the wrong side--the English. While they won most of the battles they fought, far away negotiations made their military successes irrelevant. By this time small Indian nations, however strong they might be locally, were only pawns in the diplomacy of London and Paris. And once the Americans had gained control over the lands that were to become the United States there was no way in which single Indian nations could protect themselves from what were by the 1700's the pressures of a stronger, better organized and more ruthless culture.

The Iroquois were at the mercy of the armies of Washington who no longer had an English enemy to fight and they faced the anger of the Americans over their role in the Revolution. Their land was included in the territory that England ceded to America and the Americans wanted sovereignty over that land. Some of the Iroquois were unwilling to live in an independent America and migrated to the still-British colony of Canada. Those who remained had nothing but their land to appease the anger of the Americans. Because the American government believed that Iroquois land should be obtained with some appearance of legality, the right to use land to bargain for peace and security on reservations was a weapon (though a weak one) that could be used to preserve something of the traditional Iroquois independence. But threats, bribery, and the lure of riches for individual Indians were used to make sure that Iroquois land did fall into the hands of the Americans--although the Iroquois kept a small part of the territory in which they had hunted for centuries. The fate that had befallen and was to befall almost all of the American Indian people came at

long last to the Iroquois. Their wide-ranging territory and their once-awesome power had gone. Some of the leaders received special cash grants and annuities for selling the land, although the annuities to the tribe amounted to only about $4 apiece.

The Destruction and Renewal of the Iroquois

Within thirty years of the American Revolution, the proud Iroquois became the inhabitants of reservations that were slums in the wilderness, ravaged by hunger, disease, and a loss of confidence in their own way of life. The population of Iroquoia fell from about 8,000 in 1763 to about 4,000 in 1794. Drunkenness was widespread. In 1793 a school teacher in Oneida, New York, wrote to his Indian agent that "Since the Indians received their money this place has been a little hell on earth. Wish you at least write orders that not one white man in the place shall either sell rum or lend it to the Indians on any pretence whatsoever."* There were also many suicides of Iroquois men and constant accusations of witchcraft in the villages. All over the world and even today drunkenness, suicide, and a belief that mysterious forces are causing problems are the signs that a society may be breaking apart. What conditions do you think led to these troubles in late eighteenth century Iroquoia? We will see in the next chapter that suicides and drunkenness are still major problems on many Indian reservations today.

Two possibilities were offered to the Iroquois of the late eighteenth century as solutions to their problems, as they are still possibilities to Indians today. Some of their leaders urged the tribe to adopt European ways and merge into white society. Joseph Brant, the leader of the Iroquois group that migrated to Canada after the Revolution, had become a devout Episcopalian and planned to learn Greek so that he could translate the New Testament into Mohawk, one of the Iroquois languages. He urged his people to adopt farming on the European model and tried to built an English-style village on the land his people held in Ontario. Other Iroquois leaders urged the people to hold steadfast to the old ways and resist any European

*Quoted in Anthony F. C. Wallace. The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca. New York: Vintage Books, 1969, p. 199.

customs. As Red Jacket, one conservative chief, told a missionary who came to his village, he "cannot see that learning would be of any service to us," although he did say that "we will leave it to others who come after to judge (that) for themselves."*

But neither of these positions helped most Iroquois families to solve their individual problems. It was impossible without land on which to hunt to live in the old way (and Red Jacket had played his part in selling Iroquoia). Most families could not adopt Joseph Brant's solution: he was an Iroquois chief, he had been to England, his sister was married to an Englishman, and he had learned English long before. They could not make the jump from their old life of hunting and farming small garden patches to a new life with a new kind of work. This solution demanded too much. Another answer to the Iroquois' problems was required, one that would give families a new reason for life and uncomplicated yet sensible rules to live by. The Iroquois found such a solution; too few other Indian nations have had such luck.

In 1799 an Iroquois chief who participated in the discussions and conferences that led to the collapse of the Iroquois confederacy, Handsome Lake, experienced a series of visions in which he believed he had talked with Christ and the traditional Indian Great Spirit. Both told him of their concern for the drunkenness and witchcraft the Iroquois were experiencing, and urged him to tell his people that destruction of the world was at hand but that salvation could come to those who refrained from the sins of drinking, witchcraft, and love magic. Under the influence of Handsome Lake and his disciples, temperance was enforced in villages; farming of corn in fenced fields began; sanitation was improved and with it health; and individual Indians learned the skills of weaving, blacksmithing, bootmaking, and carpentry. Schools were established in which the followers of Handsome Lake taught English to children. A new source of cohesion and purpose emerged in Iroquoia; and although the tribe still suffered from intertribal feuding and attempts by the Americans to take its land, these problems seemed less important.

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*Quoted in Wallace, op. cit., p. 205.

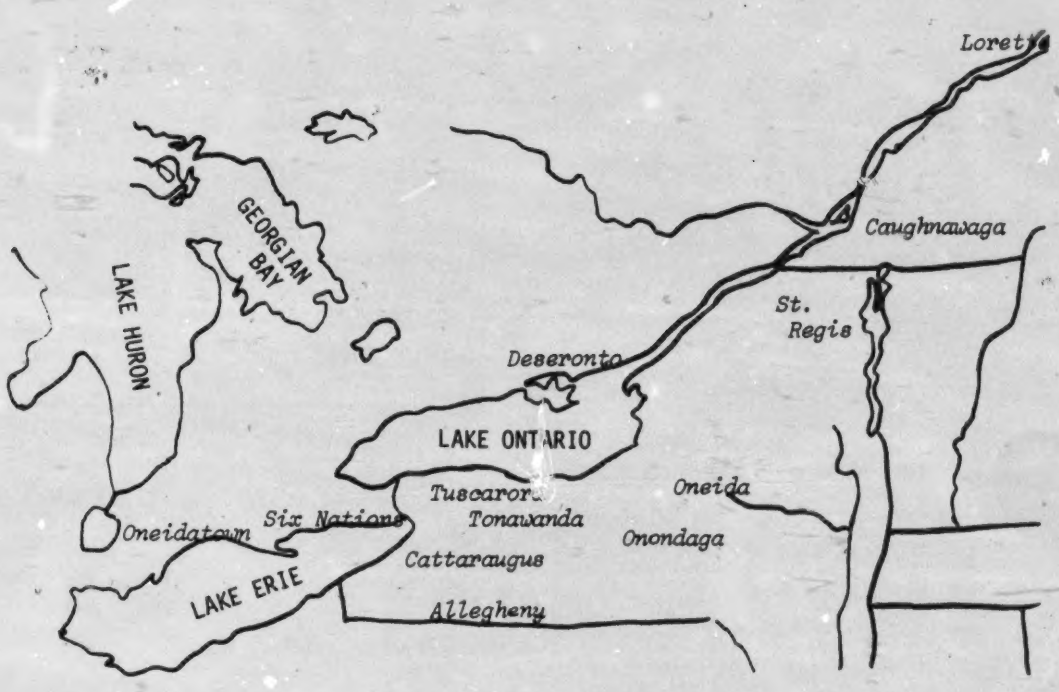
Handsome Lake himself died in 1815, but his work was continued by disciples who created a church amongst his followers. This gave many Iroquois a source of spiritual strength to which they could turn (as Europeans have turned to their churches) in times of difficulty and trouble. The Church of Handsome Lake offered a community and a system of beliefs which permitted many Iroquois to accept and adapt to the new European-dominated world they had to enter to survive while, at the same time, holding onto their own pasts.

Today most Iroquois men support their families by working on the railroads, in the factories of Buffalo, and in the steel industry. Iroquois farms and housing are modern; and the change from a tribal pattern of life to one in which the family is central, one of the crucial teachings of Handsome Lake, has long been completed. They are modern, though different Americans. But the messages that Handsome Lake taught are still remembered by many Iroquois and are a way by which many members of the nation preserve their identification with their own non-European past. The Iroquois have experienced a different history than most other Indians. Tragically, too few Indians have been able to experience a cultural revival like the Iroquois; perhaps because they were not able to share a similar triumphant past with this nation which was at one point the equal in strength and aggressiveness of America's white conquerors.

White Occupation of the Midwest

We have looked so far in this chapter at the history of one remarkable group of Indian people, and explored the impossible problems they faced as they attempted to reconcile their wish to be an independent Indian nation with the problems that flowed from their involvement in trade with Europeans. A number of Indian nations had histories similar to that of the Iroquois, a history in which, for a period, they survived and prospered as independent nations although they were in contact with the Europeans. However, most Indian communities did not share this pattern. Instead it was more common for Indians who came into contact with Europeans, and particularly with the English, to have a brief period of prosperity that was followed by conflict in which the Indians were defeated, and then by a time of disease and hunger caused by the loss of hunting and farming lands. Let us now look at this more typical pattern by turning again to the lower peninsula of Michigan.

MODERN RESERVATIONS AND SETTLEMENTS OF IROQUOIS DESCENDANTS*



*Fenton, p. 159.

Pontiac's War

With the departure of the French from Canada in 1763, the whole pattern of life around the Great Lakes changed. The French gave up their chain of forts and posts extending all through the region and along the Mississippi Valley, and were replaced by the English. Old patterns of trade and loyalty were broken; and the presents which both the French and the English had given to "buy" Indian support, and which the Indians had regarded as proper repayments for their efforts on behalf of their allies, stopped. Common presents had included blankets, knives, cloth, powder and shot, glasses, needles, thread, rum, and clothing.

Suddenly all of the problems associated with the changes that had been taking place in the lives of these people for over a hundred years surfaced. The first sign of this outburst of discontent was a religious movement among the Indian peoples of the Great Lakes, an emotional response to problems that they did not understand and which they could not comprehend except in terms of supernatural forces of good and evil. A man ~~who~~ became known as the Delaware Prophet had visions in which the Master of Life spoke to him telling him that the Indians faced eternal damnation and giving him detailed instructions which, if followed, would enable the Indians to drive whites from their country, recapture their happiness, and find again the road to heaven. The Master of Life called the Delaware Prophet, Neolin, ("The Enlightened"), and appointed him to preach to the tribes. The Delaware Prophet went in search of the Creator and after several adventures found a village in which he met the Master of Life who told him:

> I am the Master of Life. Listen to that which I will tell thee for thyself and for all the Indians. I am the Maker of Heaven and earth, and because I love you, you must do my will; you must also avoid that which I hate; I hate you to drink as you do; I wish you not to fight one another; you take two wives, or run after other people's wives; you should have but one wife, and keep her until death. When you go to war, you juggle, you sing the medicine song, thinking you speak to me; you deceive yourselves; it is to the Manito that you speak; he is a wicked spirit who induce you to evil, and, for want of knowing me, you listen to him.
>
> The land on which you are, I have made for you, not for others: wherefore do you suffer the whites to dwell upon your lands... Were you not wicked as you are, you would not need them. Before those

> whom you call your brothers had arrived, did not your bow and arrow maintain you? You needed neither gun, powder, nor any other object. The flesh of animals was your food, their skins your raiment. But when I saw you inclined to evil, I removed the animals into the depth of the forest, that you might depend on your brothers for your necessaries, for your clothing. Again become good and do my will, and I will send animals for your sustenance. *

Was the Prophet's call for a return to old ways possible after a hundred years of Indian contact with Europeans? Converts to the teachings of the Delaware Prophet came from far and wide. Within a year the religious movement that was initiated by the Prophet became part of the inspiration of a series of attacks on British forts by Indians that historians know as Pontiac's Rebellion.

In the spring of 1763, Pontiac, an Ottawa chief from a village near Detroit and a disciple of the Delaware Prophet, began planning an attack on the British fort at Detroit. His plan was a spark that ignited the tribes of the northwest. Suddenly warriors from the Ottawa, Chippewa, Potawatomi, Huron, Miami, Wea, Delaware, Shawnee, and westernmost Iroquois nations launched a series of attacks on the English forts of the frontier. Within months many forts had been captured, and it seemed as if the English might be driven out of their newly acquired territories. The English, however, were able to bring reinforcements from the east to reoccupy forts that had been, in some cases, deserted by their Indian conquerors and, in other cases, drove the Indians away. By the summer of 1763, the Indian warriors who had remained in the battle began to drift away from the war camps and return home for their summer hunting and fishing. By the end of the summer, at fort after fort, Indian bands were making peace with the English. With the signing of these individual peace treaties, a significant attempt by the Indians of the northwest to resist further assault on their lands faded away.

But did the conspiracy of Pontiac represent a real attempt by the Indians of the northwest to drive Europeans from their lands? Here is part of a speech Pontiac made to the people who supported him at Detroit:

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*Quoted in Anthony F. C. Wallace. The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca, New York: Vintage Books, 1969, pp. 117-118.

> It is important for us, my brothers, that we exterminate from our land this nation which only seeks to kill us. You see, as well as I do, that we cannot longer get our supplies as we had them from our brothers, the French. The English sell us the merchandise twice dearer than the French sold them to us, and their wares (are worth) nothing. Hardly have we bought a blanket or something else to cover us, than we must think of having another of the kind. When we want to start our winter quarters they will give us no credit, as our brothers, the French did. When I go to the English chief to tell him that some of our comrades are dead instead of weeping for the dead, as our brother the French, used to do, he makes fun of me and of you. When I ask him for something for our sick, he refuses, and tells me that he has no need of us. You can see by that the he seeks our ruin. Well, my brothers, we must all swear to ruin them! Nor will we wait any longer, nothing impedes us. There are very few of them, and we can easily overcome them. All of the nations who are our brothers strike a blow at them; why should we not do the same? Are we not men like them? Have I not shown you the warbelts which I have received from our great father, the Frenchmen? He tells us to strike; why should we not listen to his words?*

The Delaware Prophet had called on the Indian people of the northwest to drive Europeans from America. But it was not the idea of war against the Europeans that became the spark of the Pontiac's war, but the idea of driving away the English. What does this tell us? Two hundred years of trading between the French (and the English) had brought the Indian people of the Great Lakes so completely into the world of Europe that they needed European goods and needed credit at the beginning of each winter. In fact, this interdependence between Europe and America's Indians had become so complete by the middle of the eighteenth century that a large part of the complaint of these Indians against the English rested around their unwillingness to keep up the kind of close contact that had developed during the French and Indian wars as the French and the English vied with each other to buy the loyalty of the Indians with presents and high prices for furs.

The Indians could not win a war, as distinct from a battle, against Europeans; England and the other European powers could organize their armies more efficiently than could the Indians, and they could plan a military campaign that would last for years. They had soldiers who would obey orders they did not necessarily understand,

*Quoted in Council on Interracial Books for Children, Chronicles of American Indian Protest, Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Premier, 1971, pp. 40-41.

and they had farmers who could grow food to feed their armies. Within the Indian nations there were no soldiers who would fight a war or obey orders they did not understand, there were no rulers who could govern without the active consent and support of their people, and all of their men were citizen-soldiers who had to return to their homes at the beginning of each winter to collect the food their families needed to survive through the next winter. Because they had resources of this kind at their command to wield against the loose confederations of villages that made up an Indian nation, Europeans became an irresistible force in America.

The American Occupation at the First "West"

Although the English eventually defeated the Indian nations who joined Pontiac's "conspiracy" against them, the victories of the Indians did frighten them. They did not want to find themselves constantly fighting in a land far from England itself, and far even from eastern towns like New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. As a result of this unwillingness to involve themselves in constant small wars in the far-away forests of the northwestern frontier, the British government agreed, as part of the treaties it made with the tribes supporting Pontiac, to set a boundary between the English and the Indian territories in America, and recognize the Indians as proprietors of their traditional lands. But while this agreement seemed sensible in London, it infuriated England's colonists in America because they had assumed that the end of the French and Indian wars would open the former French lands for settlement. George Washington, for example, in 1763 bought shares in a company that hoped to buy and later sell 2.5 million acres of land in the Ohio Valley. The agreement England made with the Indians ended this scheme--but it did not end Washington's interest in buying for later sale the virgin and unpopulated lands to the west of the boundary between the colonies and the Indian territory. And so he employed a surveyor to find other "valuable land" in the Indian territory. Here is part of a letter he wrote to his surveyor:

> I can never look upon that proclamation in any other light (but this I say among ourselves) than as a temporary expedient to quiet the minds of the Indians... of course, in a few years...I would recommend to you to keep this whole matter a profound secret... because I might be censured for the opinion I have given

> in respect to the King's proclamation, and then, if the scheme I am now proposing to you was known, it might give the alarm to others and, by putting them upon a plan of the same nature (before we could lay a proper foundation for success ourselves) set the different interests aclashing, and probably in the end overturn the whole; all of which may be avoided by silent management and the (operation) smugly carried on by you under the pretence of hunting other game. *

After 1763, it became more and more clear that the interest of the American colonies and the interests of England on such issues as the right of Americans to settle in Indian lands were different. Americans wanted land--they did not want to trade furs with Indians. They wanted control over their own affairs so that they could make their own decisions about moving further and further into the "wilderness" around the Great Lakes. We all know the result of this developing conflict of interest; in 1776 the thirteen colonies declared themselves independent of England. And as soon as the Revolutionary War was over a rush to the "empty" west began.

But, of course, the lands of the west were not empty or unoccupied. They were peopled by Indian hunters and farmers who depended on all the resources that the land could provide for their livelihood. But these people did not share European ideas about owning land. For American Indians, land was part of their environment, no more important than, say, the rivers or the lakes, or the trees that grew on the land. Their wealth and their food came from the whole of their environment and no one part of that environment was more important than any other. Part of the food supply of a band of Indians came from gardening on small patches of land, part from fishing in streams and lakes, part from hunting the animals that roamed the forest; and part from collecting fruits and nuts from trees. The people in each band worked together to get food and shared what they got. Because of this way of living no Indian group had anything resembling a European idea of individual ownership. It was incomprehensible to the Indians of the seventeenth century that anybody could believe that a particular stretch of river, a certain group of trees or individual animals belonged to one person or family.

The European fur traders who came to America only to collect the harvest of the forests understood these aspects of Indian society. But the men who came to

*Ibid, p. 43.

secure land for themselves did not. They wanted land and had no time to understand how a people, whom they viewed as primitive, understood their world. The ideas of fixed wealth and individual ownership seem so obvious even to us that it is hard to understand how the Indians could not grasp them. Try to think of it in terms of a comparison like this. The sea is an environment that we think about in ways similar to the ways in which Indians thought about their world. To a fisherman, no particular piece of the sea is worth owning; but all of it is important because all of it combines to support fish. Also, we see the sea as inexhaustible; in the same way the resources of the land seemed inexhaustible to the Indians of America. The willingness of the Indians to welcome Europeans faded after 1763, as they realized that they meant to drive the Indians from their land and to change their environment forever. But as we have seen earlier, the arrival of Europeans with skills and goods which were unknown to the Indians but which they felt they needed had already begun to destroy Indian society.

In 1790, there were about four million people in the United States; ten years later there were only five million people, but by 1810 there were over seven million. Thousands rushed westward to fulfill their dreams of owning a farm. The Indians who "owned" and occupied the land were a threat to the ideal of private ownership and a nuisance to be eliminated. But the United States government recognized the legal right of Indians to the land they occupied. Thus these rights had to be eliminated by treaties in which the land was ceded to the U. S. government in exchange for payments to the Indians. As a result, as settlements pushed the frontier further and further west, government officials followed along negotiating treaties which legalized what was happening. But almost invariably, Americans who had settled "illegally" on Indian lands had taken matters into their own hands long before the government officials had arrived and had tried to drive the Indians away from their farms and settlements by force. This produced bitterness and rage among the Indians who wanted to preserve their own freedom, and their way of life.

In the Midwest, the Indians found a great leader, the Shawnee Tecumseh, who led them into active resistance to the American advance into the lands north of the Ohio River. To Tecumseh, the War in 1812 between the United States and England offered:

> a chance such as will never occur again--for us Indians of North America to form ourselves in one great combination and cast our lot with the British in this war. And should they conquer and again get mastery of all of North America, our rights to at least a portion of the land of our fathers will be respected by the King. If they should not win and the whole country should pass into the hands of the Long Knives--we see this plainly--it will not be many years before our last place of abode and our last hunting ground will be taken from us, and the remnants of the different tribes between the Mississippi, the Lakes and the Ohio River will be all driven towards the setting sun.*

Tecumseh's worst fears came to pass. But he fought the encroachments of whites on the Indian lands of the midwest every inch of the way until, fighting with the English, he was killed in 1813. He was one of the great figures in the history of America--when we include in that history Indians as well as whites. But without allies, without unity, and without leaders who saw clearly what the Indian interest was, and threatened by a an aggressive government and culture, Indian opposition to the U. S. melted away.

Indians After the 1812 War

The inconclusive ending of the War of 1812 resulted in an agreement between Britain and the United States to end the thirty or so years of skirmishing that came after the Revolution by establishing a permanent division of North America--with the same result that had occurred so many times before--the Indians were the losers. The American government was free to secure all of the lands in its territory for its settlers.

In 1818 it was decided in Washington that a treaty was needed with the Indians of the lower peninsula of Michigan that would clear all of that rich territory for settlement. In the fall of 1819, General Lewis Cass, the Governor of the Northwest Territory, set out from Detroit for the important settlement at Saginaw to conduct the treaty negotiations. He was entering a world that had been changed by two hundred years of white occupation of America, in which Indian leadership had been defeated in futile wars. White Americans had thought seriously about their Indian predecessors only when they were in the way, or could promote their ambitions. Cass knew all this very well.

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*Ibid, pp. 77-78.

A treaty had been made in Detroit in 1807, in which the United States government had agreed to give $1,666 annually to some Chippewas around Detroit in return for land. This money had never been paid. As Cass wrote in a letter to the U. S. government:

> It would be hopeless to expect a favorable result to the proposed treaty unless the annuities previously due are discharged. Under these circumstances I have felt myself embarrassed and no course has been left to me but to procure the amount of the Chippewa annuity on my own responsibility. By the liberal conduct of the Directors of the bank in this place, I have succeeded in procuring that annuity in silver, and thus shall be able to comply with past engagements before I call upon the Indians to perform others. *

This paragraph comes from a letter Cass wrote to the Secretary of War in Washington; should we regard our assessment of its tone as a fair reflection of what Cass himself might have felt? Here is another quotation from an article Cass wrote in the 1830's:

> That a few naked wandering barbarians should stay the march of cultivation and improvement, and hold in a state of perpetual unproductiveness immense regions formed by Providence to support millions of human beings...? **

Cass made a speech to the Indians telling them how much the government cared for their welfare, how much better a life of farming was than hunting and fishing, how much better life on reservations was, and how many goods would be given them if they would agree to the terms the government was proposing. The chief spokesman of the Indians, O-ge-maw-ke-ke-to, followed:

> We are here to smoke the pipe of peace, but not to sell our lands. Our American Father wants them. Our English Father treated us better. He has never asked for them. Your people trespass upon our hunting grounds. You flock to our shores. Our waters grow warm. Our land melts like a cake of ice. Our possessions grow smaller and smaller. Our women reproach us. Our children want homes. Shall we sell from under them the spot where they spread their blankets? ***

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*Quoted in Fred Dustin, "The Treaty of Saginaw 1819." Michigan Archeologist, 14, 1968, pp. 98-99..

**Quoted in W. L. G. Smith., The Life and Times of Lewis Cass, New York: Derby and Jackson, 1856, p. 204.

***Quoted in Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Some Psychological Determinants of Culture Change in an Iroquois Community." U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 149, 1951, p. 64.

Cass' reply to this speech was angry and its meaning was clear. He told O-ge-maw-ke-ke-to that the Americans had defeated the English and their Indian allies (including the Chippewa) and that the rules of war permitted the Americans to take the lands of defeated foes. But, he said, the Americans were generous and would give the Chippewa something in return for their land--ample reservations and instruction in agriculture. With this speech Cass left to await for events to take their course.

Nothing happened for some days after opening speeches--or at least our records of these negotiations written by whites say that nothing happened. However, after days of waiting, word was sent out unofficially by members of the American delegation that Cass was willing to permit parcels of land to be given to the Indian families of the white traders working in the Saginaw Valley. Almost immediately the Indians "agreed" to negotiate a treaty and on the next day a draft of the Treaty of Saginaw was signed. The main body of the treaty had three provisions: six million acres of land were ceded to the government, 35,000 acres were granted to the Indians as reservations, and about 7,000 acres (eleven sections of 640 acres each) were reserved for the families of the eleven traders. In September, 1819, 114 Indians put their marks on a treaty that ceded their traditional hunting lands. Cass had told them that they had to agree to sign as the cost of defeat, but what could talk of defeat have meant to these Saginaw Chippewa? This was not sufficient to make them agree willingly to sign a piece of paper. What probably happened between the first speeches at Saginaw and the final signing?

The treaty marked the end of Indians' power in Michigan. Eighteen years later, in 1837, another Commissioner of Indian Affairs dictated a new treaty with the remaining Chippewa that required them to give up the reservations they had been granted by Cass. In 1855, yet another treaty gave some of this reservation land back --but only twenty-two Indians were present to sign this last treaty. In the intervening years disease, migration, assimilation, and indifference had done what Cass was unwilling to try to do in 1819, to encourage the Indians of Michigan to go away and not be a nuisance standing in the way of white settlement. The fluid society that was the hallmark of the Chippewa and which had led them into Michigan in the first place in search of furs and money, facilitated their passing away. Without a strong social structure, individual Chippewa bands made what they could of their new world and

gradually disappeared. In 1900, there were about 6,000 Indians living in the state, mainly in the upper peninsula, with only a few families still living on the reservations that had been created in the Saginaw Valley. The pattern that had been and was the history of the Indian peoples of the eastern half of the United States was repeated.

Only in the west, in the barren lands of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota where farming was impossible and settlement came late was it possible for Indian nations for a time to escape this fate. Because these lands were poor, the people who lived on them remained relatively untouched by the active demands of individual land seekers until after the Civil War. They shared and share the problems of the Indians of the eastern half of the Nation.

As we shall see in the next chapter, the tragedy that the arrival of Europeans in America in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries began continues to the present. Each year the situation becomes more difficult for those Indians who are not able to join America's European society like the Iroquois Joseph Brant, and who seek like the followers of Handsome Lake a way to preserve something of their traditional culture while adapting to the new.

CHAPTER IV
INDIAN AMERICANS TODAY

We have discussed the history of the Iroquois--an Indian people of the northeastern quarter of the United States. We did this because it seemed that the best way to come to an understanding of the roots of the problems of America's Indians was by way of an in-depth study of a particular region. We assumed, of course, that the history of the region we were studying was similar to that of other regions. This was a reasonable assumption: the Indians of the northeast shared with all other Indians in America the problems that flowed from contact with European civilization. Traditional ways of life were disrupted by European trade. Whites demanded their lands and took them by force when tribes were unwilling to "sell." They removed and confined a people who had lived freely on all the land to often worthless reservations. Certainly some of the most dramatic and tragic events in the history of the relations between the Indians and their European conquerors did not appear in the northeast with the intensity and horror that they did in the nation as a whole. But in one sense, the destruction of the Indian people that took place in the east was more terrible than it was in other parts of the nation because it was almost total.

Census figures show this in a cold way. We do not know how many Indians there were within the borders of the present United States at the time of the European invasion (the estimates range from one to ten million), but it does seem clear that the northeast part of the United States was once fairly densely populated. Today only about 35,000 of the nation's 600,000 Indians live in this region, mostly in New York State. The people of the east shared with all of the Indian people of America the common experience of disease, malnutrition and massacre (these three factors led to the fall of America's Indian population from about 600,000 in 1800 to about 250,000 in 1850), and they suffered the almost total loss of their land.

But there is another side to this bleak picture of Indian life in the east. Most reservations there can at least support their small populations. (It is in the west, where most Indians live, on reservations created out of wasteland, that the problem of Indian poverty is most acute.) There is in the east one of the few Indian communities, the Caughnawaga Iroquois, many of whose men work on the high steel as riggers,

that made a successful adaptation to the dominant culture of white America. They live as Indians while at the same time sharing the prosperity of America. The story of the Caughnawaga is a curious one. In 1714, one English observer of the Iroquois stated that "they will walk over deep Brooks, and Creeks, on the smallest poles and that without any Fear or Concern."* In 1886, the managers of a bridge-building project on the St. Lawrence River in Canada, saw members of the Caughnawaga Iroquois showing this skill and recruited them to work as riggers on their project. Caughnawaga men eagerly took this work because it satisfied their manly ideals. Today there are 800 prosperous Caughnawaga Indians living in Brooklyn but using their reservation in Quebec as a summer resort, a retirement community, and as a place where their children can be educated in Mohawk, English, and French. The small, closely-knit community of Caughnawaga Iroquois, with skills that can earn them money, preserved their tribal base. They have schools on their reservations that respect their traditions and so can teach other children to be both Indians and Americans. Because of this, they escape from the problems afflicting so many of the nation's Indians, particularly those on the reservations of the west and central plains.

Many, many American Indians have not been able to make such a successful adaptation to the demands of white America: they do not speak English well, they have not been successful at school, they cannot hold or get jobs, and they do not share the values of the dominant society. As a result they live with poverty and disease.

U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES**

Year	Indians on Reservations	Non-Whites	All Males
1965	41.9	7.4	4.0
1966	41.9	6.3	3.2
1967	37.3	6.0	3.1

*Cited in Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Some Psychological Determinants of Culture Change in an Iroquois Community," U. S. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 149, 1951, p. 64.

**Tables adapted from Alan L. Sorkin, American Indians and Federal Aid. Washington: Brookings Institute, 1971.

INCOME OF INDIAN, NONWHITE, AND ALL MALES IN DOLLARS

Year	All	Non-Reservation	Reservation	Non-Whites	All Males
1939	n.a.*	n.a.	500	925	2,300
1944	n.a.	n.a.	660	1,600	2,900
1949	950	1,040	825	1,925	3,475
1959	1,925	2,570	1,475	2,950	5,050
1964	n.a.	n.a.	1,800	3,426	6,283
Percentage Increase 1939-1964			260	270	173

COMPARISON OF CAUSES OF DEATH
BETWEEN INDIANS AND U.S., ALL RACES
CALENDAR YEAR 1967

Cause of Death	Ratio: Indian to Rest of U.S.
Accidents	3.9:1
Diseases of the heart**	.7:1
Influenza and pneumonia	2.4:1
Diseases of infants	.9:1
Stroke	.9:1
Cirrhosis of the Liver	4.4:1
Homicide	3.5:1
Diabetes	2.1:1
Suicide	2.1:1
Tuberculosis	8.0:1
Gastritis	3.3:1

**Mostly illnesses of older people. Proportionately fewer Indians reach the age groups where these diseases become important.

*n.a. = not available

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF DEATHS BY AGE;
INDIAN AND U.S. ALL RACES (1967)

Age	Indian	U.S. All Races
Under 1	13.9	4.3
1-4	4.3	0.7
5-14	2.5	0.9
14-15	7.5	2.0
25-34	8.2	1.9
35-44	9.0	4.0
45-54	9.7	8.9
55-64	11.6	15.9
65-74	15.0	23.7
Over 75	18.0	37.7

These statistics tell only part of the story of the plight of the Indian in America. He is poor, often sick, and badly educated. The history we described in the last chapter tells us some of the reasons for this. America's Indians were able, at least initially, to halt the tide of European occupation of America. But only for a comparatively short period: the desire that the Indians had for European goods threw them into the arms of the whites so that, as in the case of the Iroquois, tensions within the Indian community caused, in large part, the destruction of Indian civilization. Internal pressures and needs, diseases that the Indians had no immunity against destroyed their ways of life.

In the face of the destruction of their social institutions and their economy, what could individual Indian families do? In a loose sense they had two real options; (1) They could join white society when and how they came into contact with it: by marrying a trapper, by learning to read and write and joining a mission organization or the government, or by farming. Many Indians took and are taking this path. (2) They could accept the offer of the U.S. government to make treaties with their tribes, and live on the reservations and the allotments they were granted, at peace with both the government and themselves. Provided that the land on which their

reservations were located was not wanted by other settlers, this solution also worked for many Indians. They could accept the rules and regulations which the government imposed on them, and services that the government and missions provided them. Sometimes they could do this without yielding their own independence.

A large part of the problem of the Indians today has its origins in the adaptations that individual Indians, one by one, have had to make to the press of European civilization and culture. While some progress has been made to help the Indians, this progress has not been adequate. The following case study of a midwestern Indian nation illustrates the problems of cultural adaptation and change.

The Termination of the Menominee

At the time of European entry into the territory that became Wisconsin, the Menominee were a small group living in one village who had been almost wiped out by war with other tribes during the mid-seventeenth century. The tribe was weak and disorganized, unable to resist white influence, and, during the next century, the Menominee proved so receptive to both the French and the English that they were converted to Christianity sooner than any other tribe in the region.

The government of the United States made its first serious contacts with the Menominee in the early 1800's. Authority was quickly established over the tribe, and the usual process of treaty and land purchase went smoothly. In 1821, the Menominee were forced to permit the landless Stockbridge and Oneida Indians from New York State to settle on part of their land. In 1831, they ceded their first land to the government for settlement and, by 1854 the Menominee had relinquished 9,500,000 acres in return for a reservation of 275,000 acres of isolated and forested wilderness that nobody at the time wanted. However, the peace that the Menominee thought they had bought by moving to a wilderness did not last for many years. Their wilderness was forested and the timber barons of Wisconsin wanted their land; luckily, however, the Menominee were able to resist this new pressure to cede their land yet again, and kept their reservation.

However, the Menominee could not keep the U.S. government from undermining their traditional patterns of leadership. In 1890, the tribal chiefs were taken

to Washington and persuaded to surrender their titles and become tribal judges appointed by the government. As the traditional chiefs died, the government appointed the most cooperative tribe members as judges, with the result that (in the words of one anthropologist who lived on the reservation for over a year in the 1940's), "More and more the traditional leadership was undermined and the function of the tribal council circumscribed. In their place the government built up a system of direct and paternalistic relationships between itself and the individual Menominee."* Traditional institutions faded away and were not replaced by any new institutions--with the result that the tribe lost a sense of why it was living together or where it was going. Largely because of these policies of the U. S. Indian Service (later the Bureau of Indian Affairs), the Menominee became dependent on government officials for decisions about their future, and developed little experience in managing the village councils, their own hospitals, schools and libraries or in making decisions concerning such matters as taxes.

Yet, despite these problems, the Menominee were reasonably prosperous because the reservation had a steady income from its tribal forests and a tribally-owned timber mill. Men could work in the mill when they wanted some money. Profits from the timber mill had also permitted the reservation to build up utilities that provided cheap electric power and telephones to families of the reservation, and a hospital which any of the Menominee could use as often as they wished without paying. Almost all other services on the reservation were provided by the federal government through the Bureau of Indian Affairs--snow was swept, when anybody bothered, by Bureau trucks, and roads were repaired by the Bureau. Most of these services were paid for with tribal funds.

It was this prosperity that brought the Menominee to their problems. In 1908, a law had been passed by Congress that strictly controlled how much timber could be cut from Menominee forests each year. In 1934, members of the tribe began to believe that too much timber was being cut from their land and went to court to get damages from the federal government for permitting excessive cutting. Seventeen

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*George Spindler, "Sociocultural and Psychological Processes in Menominee Acculturation," University of California Publications on Culture and Society, V, 1955, p. 56.

years later they won their case and were awarded damages of $8,000,000 which, when added to existing tribal funds, meant that the tribe as a whole had just under $10,000,000 in the bank.

The tribe decided that the best thing it could do with this windfall was to keep half for community improvement and to divide the rest by giving $1,500 to each individual in the tribe. The plan had to be approved by the U. S. Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs. This committee was headed by Senator George Watkins of Utah who strongly believed that the Indians should be allowed to manage their own affairs. He told the representatives of one tribe when they appeared before his committee in Washington:

> . . . We want to take off the shackles and make you free men, free to make a mistake or two if you want to, if that is the way it has to be done. That is the way most of us learned, by making a few mistakes. That is what we are trying to do for you, take the shackles off. We pay you a great compliment when we say you are sure to do a good job. In fact I think you will do a better job than we have been doing for 135 years. . . I cannot be a party, personally, to seeing the United States go and deprive the people, the citizens, who are able to take care of themselves, of the right to make their own decisions, and have the United States go on and make those decisions for them. That is the right that you are entitled to have*

Senator Watkins had been thinking about the problems of the Indians for many years and he had concluded that the U. S. government had caused more problems for the Indians than it had solved. He answered the Menominee's request for their money by proposing to terminate the trusteeship that the Bureau of Indian Affairs held; thus permitting them to use their money to find their own way in the world.

Senator Watkins believed that government should not interfere too much in the lives of individuals, which explained his decision concerning the Menominee. Whatever you may think of his views as they applied to white Americans--do you think his analysis of Indian problems was correct? What might the Menominee face if they were suddenly "terminated?" These are difficult questions and we will come back to them in the last pages of this book.

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*Quoted in Gary Orfield. A Study of the Termination Policy, (unpublished M. A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1966),p. 36.

Senator Watkins went to the reservation in June, 1953, and told the tribal council that unless they voted to "manage their own affairs" he would not recommend that they be given the $1,500 per capita payments they wanted. He then left the reservation and awaited the tribal vote. Later that day the tribal council voted [illegible] to 5 in favor of termination of federal support to the tribe. Some voted for the termination because of the threat to hold up the distribution of the per capita payments that they wanted so badly. Others supported termination because they believed that tribe members were ready to manage their own affairs, without federal tutelage.

The first draft of the termination scheme prepared by the tribe's lawyers brought out a strong opposition to termination. When the full implications of termination became widely known, the opposition to it became overwhelming. At another meeting of the tribal council late in 1953, the tribe voted 195 to 0 to oppose termination. This complete turnabout in the vote is not easy to explain. The problems that the tribe was to face in the next twenty years began at that meeting.

Confronted with this vote against termination, families who had dominated the tribal council of the Menominee for years and had agreed with the termination decision did not know what to do. They did not really understand how Washington worked, and believed that if a senator wanted something, it would happen. They accepted white leadership and wanted to please the government as best they could. But they now faced the majority in the tribe which was fiercely hostile to the whole idea of termination. There was no way of working out fundamental conflicts of this kind on the reservation, but the leaders of the Menominee were still left with the task of figuring out what to do. They decided to take the path of least resistance and agree to accept the idea of termination but ask for time to make certain that a termination scheme was worked out carefully. Clearly this approach to the problem made a great deal of sense. A year later a bill to terminate federal trusteeship over the Menominee passed. As President Eisenhower signed the bill, he said:

> The Menominees have already demonstrated that they are able to manage their assets without supervision and take their place on an equal footing with other citizens of Wisconsin and the Nation. I extend my warmest commendation to the members of the Tribe for the impressive progress they have achieved and for the cooperation they have given the Congress in the development of this legislation.

> In a real sense, they have opened up a new era in Indian affairs--an era of growing self reliance which is the logical culmination of more than a hundred years of activity by the Federal government among the Indian people.*

The White House was a long way from the Menominee reservation in Wisconsin and, looked at with the beneift of hindsight, we can see that this statement by the President was quite premature. On the reservation, people were angry and afraid and by this time distrustful of their leaders who had sold them, most Menominee believed, down the drain. "I hope I'm dead before termination comes," said one Menominee, "I have thought about giving my daughters and granddaughters sleeping pills." Another said: "The white man did not live up to his treaties! They took most of our land and now want to take more."**

Yet the Menominee tribal leaders worked for the next seven years to come up with a plan for termination which would satisfy the government. The government officials on the reservation and in the Bureau of Indian Affairs had worked for termination because it was government policy. Some members of the tribe worked for termination because that seemed the best policy, but, increasingly, the rank and file members of the tribe opposed the whole idea. But termination was, after 1953, the law, and despite the fact that there was no agreement about how the termination was to be put into effect, the machinery that Senator Watkins had started ground on all through the 1950's. In 1961, a plan for termination was made final despite the opposition.

The plan for termination was complicated. All of the tribe's assets, its land, the forest, and the timber mill, was given to a company called Menominee Enterprises which was owned by members of the tribe, but controlled by the small group of Menominee who had accepted the idea of termination. The area on which the reservation was located was converted into a county, which was supposed to provide roads, schools and the like--all the services that any normal county government provides its people. The idea was that the profits of Menominee Enterprises would provide enough money to pay the taxes that would be required to support the county.

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*Ibid, p. 109.

**Quoted in David W. Ames and Burton R. Fisher, "The Menominee Termination Crisis: Barriers in the Way of Rapid Cultural Transition." Human Organization, 18, 1959, p. 103.

The difficulties were many. The money that had been spent in the years before the actual termination (the distribution of $1,500 per person that had started the whole process towards termination and all the other costs of planning for the scheme) had exhausted the tribal treasury. The tribe entered its period of termination with little of the money it needed to improve its lumbering operations, make them more profitable, and so provide the taxes that the county needed if it was to have the schools, the roads, and the health and welfare services that the needs of the Menominee required and the State demanded. The efforts that were made after 1961 to put Menominee Enterprises on a profitable basis only made matters worse. The managers of the company dismissed all of the Menominee men who worked at the mill only when they needed money and performed poorly. They sold some of the reservation land to a white developer to create a vacation village, they tried to sell 4,300 acres of their land to the State for a park, and they closed the tribal hospital to save money. In fact, experience has shown that many of the Menominee were not ready to cope with the freedom that they obtained.

The tribe members had lost the chance to get to work when they wanted it, lost their hospital, and lost part of the land that had been theirs for over a hundred years. The changes that followed termination made the problems of the people on the reservation more difficult than they had been at any point before termination. Welfare was all that was available to many of the people, and one feature of the termination scheme made that a terrible alternative to many tribal members.

Many Menominee had received, when Menominee Enterprises was created, a bond which would mature in the year 2000 for $3,000. These were worth $1,200 in 1971. To receive welfare in Wisconsin at that time a recipient could not have assets worth more than $500-$750. The only way a Menominee family could get welfare was to turn its bonds over to the state. Many families had to take this path and give their bonds in what was supposed to be their company to the state with the result that by 1969, the State of Wisconsin gained ownership of $1,030,931 of bonds in Menominee Enterprises. Problems of this kind, and we have described only a few of those the Menominee faced after termination, broke the Menominee tribe apart, but at the same time, consolidated its parts more tightly than at any other time in tribal history. After 1960, the split between those who were willing for whatever reason to try to make termination work, and those who were not, became total.

Those who opposed the scheme joined together in a close-knit group to oppose their own leaders. This merger of the opponents of termination came slowly and was marked first by marches and sit-ins on the reservation in the course of which it became clear that those who rejected termination and all that it stood for could win battles against those who were working for termination and could prevent the loss of their land and their tribal identity. In 1970, this movement of opposition crystallized into an organization called DRUMS that had the support of Menominee who had left the reservation as well as those remaining. For three years DRUMS campaigned against the leaders of Menominee Enterprises. DRUMS turned to the courts, to the Wisconsin legislature, and to the U. S. Congress for relief from the rule of those who ran Menominee Enterprises and from termination. The campaign was successful in getting the attention of Congress and the governor of Wisconsin, and finally in winning control of Menominee Enterprises by those who opposed termination and all that it stood for. In 1972 DRUMS persuaded the senators and Congressmen from Wisconsin to introduce a new bill in Congress restoring tribal status to the Menominee and restoring the federal benefits granted to Indian people. In 1974, President Nixon signed this bill. A twenty year experiment designed to "free" one tribe from "too much" government control ended.

Sweeping solutions to complex problems rarely work. For fifty years after 1850, the government tried to turn Indians into farmers by dividing reservations into small farms. In the 1950's termination was tried, but that did not work because the communities that were terminated did not have the skills or the capital to become successful businessmen. There are many kinds of problems facing Indians because individual Indians and groups of Indians have faced, and worked out different kinds of relationships with the white society that conquered them.

Adaptation of Indians to the White Conquest: The Reservation Experience

We have seen several examples of Indians who joined, or attempted to join or link themselves with the dominant American society in the different places and periods we have looked at in this book. Even Tecumseh once asked a white girl, Rebecca Calloway, to marry him, but she insisted that if she married him he would have to live as a white, and he refused to do this. The sister of Joseph Brant, the

Iroquois leader who moved with his followers to Canada rather than accept the Revolution, was married to a leading British official in pre-revolutionary New York. Brant himself moved easily in both Iroquois and British society and was a colonel in the British army. Thousands of Indians and whites married on the frontier. When Lewis Cass went to Saginaw to negotiate the Treaty of Saginaw, there were several "marriages" between Indians and traders in the valley. Often the children of such unions merged themselves with white society, becoming to all intents and purposes white, and, as a result, many Americans have Indians among their ancestors. Many other Indians have so assimilated themselves into American society that they think of themselves (when asked on questionnaires and censuses, and probably only then) as another group of hyphenated Americans.

However, although many Indians have taken the path of either complete or partial assimilation into the dominant culture of America, others have not chosen or have not been able to take this path and have remained "Indians." Some of these Indians are teachers, craftsmen, riggers and doctors, but many live on reservations which provide no opportunities for work and few prospects of any kind. This last group of Indians, those who are living their lives on America's Indian reservations, represent the nation's poorest ethnic group. They are a minority that our nation has failed to deal with successfully for a hundred years.

We have already looked at the statistics about Indian life which mark this failure. Consider also that:

*The average educational level of Indians living on reservations is the lowest of any group in the nation--five years.

*The houses of Indians on reservations are among the worst in the nation. One government survey found that in California 50% of the houses in which Indians lived needed complete replacement because they were unsafe and unsanitary. 90% of the houses in which California Indians lived were judged to need improvement.

*Indian land is cheaper and easier to take than any other land in the nation. It is taken frequently and regularly by governments to use for roads, dams, and national and state parks.

Many of these problems come from the isolation and poverty of the lands on which Indians live. But not all of the problems result from this single cause. Too often resources exist on reservations and are not used to benefit the Indians who own them. In 1966, for example, farms and ranches on Indian reservations produced about 170 million dollars of income. But Indians earned only 43 million dollars from their own farming. Let us look at another example of the same kind of problem: in 1967, about 800 million board feet of lumber were cut from forests on Indian reservations. Only 100 million board feet of this lumber were processed in Indian-owned mills like the one on the Menominee reservation; the rest was processed in the white-owned mills. Often Indians cut the trees but did not share in the steady work, or the profits that come from processing this timber in their own mills.

In other words, reservation Indians are poor not only because their lands are poor but also because somehow or other they seem to get excluded from sharing fully in the resources or opportunities that might be available for them. Let us look at one more example of what happens. Since the early 1950's it has been the policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to encourage tribes to use their funds to build industrial plants and then rent them to industries at low cost. In this way it was hoped that jobs would be created near reservations to provide steady work and pay. However, very little happened as a result of this program, and the Indians remained in abject poverty.

Few government-developed programs have helped. Projects to encourage Indians to farm their land have failed. Projects to develop industry on reservations have resulted in the building of factories--but more often than not they have closed within two years. Hospitals have been opened and health care has been improved, but Indians still have the lowest life expectancy in the nation. Schools have been improved but only one-half of the students on reservations finish high school. The only programs that have succeeded in improving the lives of Indians are those that have assisted Indians in moving from their rural reservations to the city, but even these have had their problems. There are few good jobs available for men and women without much education in America's cities. As a result, many urban Indians remained unemployed after they migrated to cities, and were pushed back to the

reservation they left in the hope they could find work. What can, and should be done to help? This is a difficult question.

Europeans conquered America's original Indian inhabitants; then, as we have already suggested, gave those Indians who survived the diseases and chaos that the conquest brought, two options: join European society if you want to and can, or go where you will not be a nuisance. Both of these choices led to almost total destruction of the vitality and creativity of Indian culture. For those who married Europeans or adopted the ways of Europeans, the old ways had to go. For those who could not, there were only the reservations where an unfeeling government accepted poverty as the Indian's lot and created more poverty by stripping away the few resources the tribes had on the lands they were given. On these reservations, to survive meant finding a way in which people could live without regular work, without money and in the face of the efforts of government officials to "improve" Indians without changing the conditions under which Indians lived. Here is one Oglala Sioux Indian's summary of his people's history:

> In the past 190 years the U. S. Government has tried every possible way to get rid of the troublesome Indian problem... First the Government tried extinction through destruction--where was paid for scalps of every dead Indian. Then the Government tried mass relocation and containment through concentration--the moving of entire tribes or parts of tribes to isolated parts of the country where they were herded like animals and fed like animals for the most part. Then the Government tried assimilation--where reservations were broken up into allotments (an ownership system the Indians did not understand) and Indians were forced to try to live like 'white men!' Indian dances and Indian hand work was forbidden. A family's ration of food was cut off if anyone in the family was caught singing Indian songs or doing Indian handcraft. Children were physically beaten if they were caught speaking Indian languages. Then Termination was tried--land was taken out of trust relationship with the U. S. Government and an unrestricted patent in fee was issued to the Indian whether he wanted it or not or whether he understood what was going on or not. *

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*Statement by Earl Old Person, Chairman of the Blackfeet Tribe, 1966, quoted in Edgar S. Cahn and David W. Hearne, ed., Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America. (Washington, D. C.: New Community Press, 1969), p. 18.

Through many years some attempts were made to understand the difficulties faced by the Indians, but the resulting actions and programs have rarely been fully successful. And this is as true today as it was in the past. There is one civil servant in the Bureau of Indian Affairs for every eighteen Indians, yet only a few Indians have well-paying jobs in the Bureau. The Bureau is supposed to look after the interests of the Indian, but it does not even use the jobs it controls as a way of assisting Indian development. Instead, it "protects" Indians from themselves and from the possibility of controlling their own destiny--and in so doing reinforces the cycle of poverty and misery by making it impossible for many Indians to learn any skills except how to cheat the system. Indians have survived, but in learning how to survive, they have lost control of their own resources and their own destinies.

Two hundred years of teaching the necessity of poverty and dependency, and two hundred years of learning how to survive in poverty have resulted in 400,000 reservation Indians being passed by. Money and jobs can be gotten on the reservation by begging or just being there. To leave the reservation and face the problems of the cities is for many badly-educated and untrained Indians too great a risk. If he leaves he loses all the "benefits" that we, in our unthinking generosity, have provided: his free health services, the possibility of a job, and the favors and friendships that he can expect from those he has known all of his life. So many Indians stay on the reservation accepting what is given them, and resisting--as they have resisted for so many years--both the pressure to move and make a new beginning, and the pressure to change their lives in any significant way. They live in a world far removed from the mainstream of our society:

> An Indian woman was denied permission by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to withdraw the money she had in her bank account to develop her property so that she could lease her land. She got her money by later telling the Bureau officials that she needed it to feast her kin.
>
> Indians are not allowed to use their land for purposes they choose unless their plans have been reviewed by government officials. This review can take years and often the plans of individual Indians are rejected. *

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*Ibid, p. 125.

A member of a Ponca tribe of Oklahoma complained when a county road was built across his land without his permission. When he complained he was dropped from a food distribution program.

In 1938, the Bureau of Indian Affairs decided that Osage Indians whom the Bureau decided were not competent to manage their own affairs could not get more than $1,000 per quarter from leases of their mineral rights. That limit remains in force today. Anything over $1,000 is held in trust by the Bureau and its owner must establish that he needs the money for health, education, or other 'productive' purposes before he is given it. *

Abuses like these are the results of a system that has created roles for Indians and then expected that they will play them.

> The criterion for selection by those few Sioux who bother to vote in elections for their tribal council is the ability of individuals to handle whites and get something for the Sioux, not the ability of councilmen to represent the views of Indians or offer effective leadership to the tribe. **

Some Indians escape from this system but too many are the victims. What can be done to change the system that gives so many people so little?

Are There Solutions to the Indian "Problem?"

It is easier to see the problems that face so many Indians than it is to find solutions. We cannot make a people who have lived on the fringes of our culture for over two hundred years into white middle-class Americans overnight. We cannot go on offering only the choice of joining white society when we have failed for so long to make that choice real by providing the Indian with the skills and the resources he needs if the choice is to be real. Why should any Indian believe that any offer of help and assistance is genuine? Most of the promises that America has made to its Indian citizens have been hollow because we rarely give any real attention to the needs of groups that do not have political power. And, as we have seen, many of our promises have been the results of ideas--too often unreal--about what Indians should want or need. As a result, the ideas of white America, not the needs of Indians, have controlled all attempts to think about the problems of Indians.

*Ibid, p. 91.

**Robert K. Thomas, "Powerless Politics." New University Thought, 4, 1967.

But can we ever do anything else? Here is an article written by Mike Royko, a Chicago newspaper columnist, in which he clearly says what he thinks about the needs of one group of Indians struggling to make their demands on white Americans.

MIKE CHOSA A BIT CHOOSY*

by Mike Royko

Mike Chosa and his wandering Indians are about to be kicked out of still another camping ground, which means it is time for another wave of guilt feelings because of the Red Man's plight.

This time Chosa has been told to leave Camp Logan, near the Wisconsin border. The Illinois National Guard says it will soon need the place for training exercises.

But Chosa says he and his people won't leave by Wednesday's deadline because they have no decent homes to go to.

It's hard to believe, but this has been going on for almost two years.

First it was the tent village set up by Indians near Wrigley Field in May, 1970.

From there they moved to the old missile site on the lakefront, where they took part in the first Indian-white man battle since the Fort Sheridan massacre.

After taking shelter in a nearby church basement, they moved into one of the forest preserves.

Then it was on to another missile site in Du Page County, and a Methodist Church campground, and Fort Sheridan's main gate, and most recently to the National Guard camp.

During each move, Chosa has accused public officials of double-dealing, speaking with forked tongues, treaty-breaking, and all the other white man's traditional treacheries.

Most observers sympathize with him because the Indian has become the most popular of the downtrodden minorities. Today's kids never cheer for the threatened

*Chicago Daily News, April 10, 1972.

wagon train, they even boo when the cavalry rides to the rescue.

After two years, though, you would think somebody would have found housing that would be acceptable to Chosa and his followers.

At every level of government, from the local to the federal, one agency after another has given it a try.

Yet, here's Chosa, once again preparing to resist an eviction attempt because he and his people have no place to live.

When Wednesday's deadline arrives, the TV crews will be ready to record this latest treachery. An embarrassed state official will utter his regrets. And Chosa will once again lead his people--homeless and betrayed--to some other campground.

But before you begin cursing the memory of Gen. Custer, you might be interested in knowing something about the housing Chosa has been rejecting these two years.

To hear Chosa tell it, he has been offered nothing but tar-paper shacks or rat-infested slums.

The truth is most of the apartments were in decent, clean well-maintained buildings that charged reasonable rent.

Most of them are on the North Side, within walking distance to the Lakefront and public transportation.

If they weren't luxurious, they were much better than the apartments occupied by tens of thousands of other Chicagoans.

And the Town and Garden Apartment, 1448 N. Sedgwick, may be one of the best housing buys in the city. The apartments, with huge living rooms, are beautifully maintained. The rents are low. The buildings have 24-hour security service.

But Chosa says none of these places has been right, because they prevent him and his people from living together in traditional Indian tribal fashion.

That can't be disputed. It has been a long time since the buffalo roamed near Howard and Broadway. The fish do not leap in the North Branch of the Chicago

River. The deer do not lope through the forest, and we have no hunting grounds, happy or otherwise.

If that's what Chosa wants, I'm afraid that he is looking in the wrong place. This is Chicago, not North Dakota. About the best you can hope for here is hot and cold running water, a furnace that works in the winter, and a landlord who keeps the place in shape and doesn't gouge you on the rent.

Chosa may as well forget about those broken 100-year-old treaties and settle for a solid two-year lease on a clean flat.

There is no way of making final judgments about the rights and wrongs of the position taken by Royko and Chosa. There are four issues which you should think about and there are the views of Indians, perhaps the most important thing to be considered. Let us raise these issues here briefly and then conclude this book by turning to some statements by Indians and whites who are concerned about the American Indian "problem."

1. Can America permit a group of its people to live under conditions in which the infant death rate is fifty per cent higher than it is for all other people? In which tuberculosis causes death five times more often than it does in the rest of the population? In which a group is seven times as likely to contract tuberculosis, sixty-four times more likely to be stricken with dysentery, and eight times as likely to contract hepatitis? Infectious diseases are always linked closely with poor housing and sanitation. Can America permit <u>any</u> group of its people to live under conditions in which houses are dilapidated and do not have sanitary water supplies or adequate waste disposal? If there is no effective way of lifting many bands of reservation Indians out of the abject poverty that is too often their fate, other than by encouraging migration from those reservations to the cities, should we adopt such policies? Is the price of the preservation of the Indian way of life on the reservations too great if

preservation also means the preservation of poverty and disease?--even if tribes and individual Indians say that they want that way of life preserved?

2. Should Indian affairs be administered by an agency in a way that presumes that Indians must be protected from themselves--by protecting the money that individual Indians own? By requiring them to get permission to use their own funds? By refusing to permit tribal councils to have real control over their own affairs? Should any group of Americans live in a world in which a government agency has control over so many aspects of their lives? Should Indians be encouraged to stand on their own even if this means that they will make many mistakes? But shouldn't the government continue policies designed to protect any citizen from himself? And shouldn't the government assist a people, a special people, in difficulties? And can a democratic government decide that it should stop its special services to Indians even if Indians themselves want such services provided?

3. Should Indians be entitled, because of their unique historical status in the nation to more assistance from the government than any other group in our society? Or should Indians receive only the same levels of assistance that other equally deprived citizens receive?

4. Should we help Indians or should we encourage Indians to help themselves? Should we help Indians develop political skills and encourage them to use their numbers in states like Alaska, New Mexico, and Arizona to throw

from office those politicians who are insensitive to their needs? Should we encourage Indians to seek assistance from lawyers of all races to go into the courts and demand their rights even if that means that Indians win the right to live by different rules than other Americans? Or win the right to slow down economic development by slowing down the development of dams, the exploitation of forests, and oil and the like? Should we give Indians this right despite our need for energy and other natural resources? Should we tolerate the presence among Indian tribes of organizers who encourage Indians to see their problems and use their political power and legal rights to get laws passed to solve them, even if this means giving special privileges to Indians?

Don't make up your minds about these issues too quickly. First read some views expressed by both Indians and whites concerned about the fate of America's Indians.

> The people of our town have little need. They do not hanker after progress and have never changed their essential way of life. Their invaders were a long time in conquering them; and now, after four centuries of Christianity, they still pray in Tanoan to the old deities of the earth and sky and make their living from the things that are and have always been within their reach; while in the discrimination of pride they acquire from their conquerors only the luxury of example. They have assumed the names and gestures of their enemies, but have held on to their own, secret souls; and in this there is a resistance and an over-coming, a long out-waiting. *

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*Cahn and Hearne, Our Brother's Keeper, p. 185.

Indianness--being an Indian in spirit and in blood--means a refusal to become extinct.

> 'You have brought me down the White road. There in mid-earth you have placed me. I shall stand erect upon the earth.'

An so he fights to keep his heritage and move ahead in the white man's world as well. The Tlingitis put outboard motors on their canoes. The Indians of the West wear levis, not buckskin. Provided there is a need and an opportunity, the Indian will adapt in ways which do not destroy the familiar, and perhaps more sane rhythm of life that they have known. The Yankton Sioux have no clock in their electronic components factory. In New Mexico, White Mountain Apaches live in straw huts called Wickiups, but also run tourist facilities, gas stations, motels, and a prosperous cooperative cattle ranching business.

The Indian has not resited our technology, only enslavement by technology:

> 'We shall earn all these devices the
> White Man has.
> We shall handle his tools for ourselves.
> We shall master his machinery, his
> inventions, his skills, his medicine,
> his planning;
> But we'll retain our beauty
> And still be Indian.'

The Indian knows the white man's world, but the Indian world, to the white man, remains a mystery. Yet the Indian world offers so much, offers Indian solutions to white man's problems. *

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You will forgive me if I tell you that my people were Americans for thousands of years before your people were. The question is not how you can Americanize us but how we can Americanize you. We have been working at that for a long time. We sometimes are discouraged at the results. But we will keep trying. And the first thing we want to teach you is that, in the American way of life, each man has respect for his

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*Ibid, p. 181.

brother's vision. Because each of us respects his brother's dream, we enjoyed freedom here in America while your people were busy killing and enslaving each other across the water. The relatives you left behind are still trying to kill each other because they have not learned there that freedom is built on my respect for my brother's vision and his respect for mine. We have a hard trail ahead of us in trying to Americanize you and your white brothers. But we are not afraid of hard trails. *

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For the last two years the DRUMS organization has fought against overwhelming odds. They fought against the fascism of their own corporation and local government; the paternalism and injustices of the First Wisconsin Trust Co. of Milwaukee; the irresponsibilities and incompetence of the Milwaukee law firm who were supposed to be protecting our interests but were not. They fought against the blatant thievery of land developers and real estate interests who were, and still are, screwing the Menominee people out of their land and assets with the help of MEI*** officials.

Our small organization has succeeded in showing the Menominee people what they can do if they stick together and fight for what they want. DRUMS' organization and leadership has always believed in and fought for the reversal of termination, even when our puppet leadership in MEI and Menominee County said it was impossible. In two years, the DRUMS organization has succeeded in getting the necessary mechanics set up for the introduction of the Menominee Restoration Act. . . The future of DRUMS rests with the Menominee people, the grassroots people, who have yet to realize anything out of termination or land sales except increased misery and despair. The future of DRUMS also rests with the leadership of our organization who must dedicate themselves to the needs of our people. **

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*Ibid, p. 175.
**Freedom with Reservation: the Menominee Struggle to Save Their Land and People. (The National Committee to Save the Menominee People and Forests, Wisconsin Indian Legal Services, 520 University Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin), pp. 106-107.
***Menominee Enterprises, Inc.

The Indian movement forces us to face a basic and exceedingly contemporary question. Do Indians demand special rights and unreasonable privileges or simply a serious reevaluation of the concept of civil rights and liberties that may help to make megasociety more livable for all of us? Black Power and soul, Hippie and non-Hippie communes, and a host of other expressions of dissatisfaction with life in conventional, contemporary society suggest that individual 'freedom' to achieve and accumulate is not really enough. What makes the Indian movement worth careful attention is that Indian people have not had to make their delight out of necessity or whole cloth. They have old, tried models of community and culture that have stood the test of adversity and have proved flexible and adaptable to the technological complexities that so many people fear will dehumanize us. *

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The tenor of legislation and court decisions of the past generation has been hostile to the efforts of ethnic nationalists of any persuasion or location, whether Black Panthers in Oakland, Black Muslims in Manhattan, Chasidic Jews in Williamsburg, Hutterites in the Dakotas, Amish in Iowa, Polish Catholics in Chicago, or white segregationists in Alabama. Insofar as any of these groups would like to establish a complement of institutions reserved for their own people, they consistently run athwart of the law and find themselves ineligible for the federal or state support so necessary in the present American fiscal system. Perhaps because of governmental traditions (once rooted in treaty clauses), most American Indians communities have withstood these pressures better than any other ethnic group, but even they have increasingly encountered a disposition in the Congress to justify special programs for Indians only on the grounds of poverty, and otherwise to assert the evils of 'special legislation' or 'special privilege' and the necessity for treating all citizens alike. Indians attempting to maintain life as organized tribal bodies while securing various forms of state recognition and assistance are being impeded by federal pressures for 'desegregation'. . . In a certain sense the issue concerns the extent to which the U. S. is going to become a mass society--composed of isolated social atoms for whom ethnicity is an accidental cultural quality--or whether it will continue to allow a variety of forms of ethnic organizations and community. Because of the historically peculiar position of the American Indians, it may well be that their struggles for group cohesion will have ramifications for the destiny of the nation as a whole.

*Nancy Lurie. "The Contemporary Indian Scene," in Leacock and Lurie, eds. North American Indians in Historical Perspective (New York, Random House, 1971), p.470.

> Those of us who fear the complete massification of American society thus have reason to be glad that Indians maintain themselves as such, and that there continues to be the 'Indian Problem.' *

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Can you formulate a point of view about the complex "Indian problem?" One that meets the needs of Indian Americans today? And acknowledges the past? The solutions of the problems and difficulties that beset the Indians must also be in the best interests of the American society, or they probably could not be implemented.

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*Murray Wax, Indian Americans: Unity and Diversity. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971, p. 197.